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SELF-MADE ISOLATION

THE impression made by Russia's conduct of foreign policy is not that of a Machiavellian Power pursuing a calculated course of aggrandisement, but rather of a blundering and suspicious giant, throwing its weight about and hurting itself and everyone else. An isolationist policy would have made sense for the Soviet Union; so, far more clearly, would one of co-operation in Uno. But the attempt to combine the two policies is merely ludicrous. Having sponsored the United Nations and accepted its principles, with what face can the Soviet Union march out of the Security Council because the other Powers insist on hearing the spokesman of a Member State, whose case is put forward in due form?

On the basis of power-politics, with no pretence of international co-operation, no talk of the rights of small nations or the wickedness of aggression, the U.S.S.R. could justify her action in Persia. She could then argue, with suitable cynicism, that Persian Governments had always been subject to pressure from Russia, on the one side, and the Western Powers, on the other; that for reasons of expediency Lenin, 25 years ago, rejected a proposal to march into Iran and make Teheran a satellite capital, but that to-day the Soviet Union has a stronger case for taking the kind of aggressive action on which the British Empire has been built in past centuries. This *real politik* case is strengthened by the fact that all the Great Powers are now struggling for oil just as they did after the last war. British Imperial security is based on the oil of the Middle East; America explains that her own vast oil reserves will dry up in a generation or less. (She said the same thing in 1919.) These two Powers met last year and agreed about oil, without consulting their Soviet ally. Russia, now believed to be about five million tons short on her annual oil budget, tried to obtain an oil concession in North Persia; this was refused during the war as a result of Anglo-American influence in Teheran. Hence the presence of Russian troops in Persia, the "independent" State of Azerbaijan; the proposal first for an oil concession and then for a Soviet-Iranian oil trust with 51 per cent. of the shares going to the U.S.S.R.

Such a case can be made, or could be reasonably made, if we lived in a world in which small Powers could still be overrun by big neighbours without causing international repercussions. It seems clear that the U.S.S.R. hoped that the Persian Government, historically so pliable and capable of driving good financial bargains with oil-hungry States, would have reached an agreement before the Council met, or that Britain and America would grant a postponement until Soviet plans were complete and the Council would be confronted with a *fait accompli*. If these were really Soviet calculations, something is strangely amiss with the political arithmeticians of Moscow. They cannot expect to walk out of Uno when they fail to get their own way and then find it working harmoniously for them when they return. Yet we believe they wish Uno to function. The best we can hope is that they have seen from the conduct of this dispute that the effect of unilateral action and contemptuous treatment of other Powers is to throw together Britain and America, which Soviet policy seemed at first designed to separate. If the U.S.S.R. now realises that she has lost, not gained, in prestige and power by her recent policy, she may be more willing than in the past to listen to proposals for a general settlement of these Mediterranean and Middle Eastern questions that lie between Britain and the U.S.S.R. A new approach should be made, on terms of equality, to the issues of oil and strategy that are behind the present dangerous dispute.

Food Obscurities

Sir Ben Smith has repudiated his officials' hand-out forecasting an immediate cut in the British ration of fats; but his Department's unhappy record in publicity is irrelevant to the real question on which, we hope, the Minister of Food will throw some light in Parliament next week. Was the Combined Food Board, in fact, able to arrange for the allocation of such an increased volume of supplies of wheat from the exporting countries as to save the situation in India and Central Europe, and thus free Britain from the need to take any further action beyond advancing (as we are doing at present) some cargoes of wheat to Germany on the strength of future supplies assured to us? At his Press conference on Tuesday, Sir Ben created the impression that it would not be necessary to reduce the German ration below 1,000 calories daily; but this is not a diet on which a country can subsist for long. And what about the wheat supplies at Unrra's disposal? In parts of Yugoslavia the daily ration of food is already under 1,000 calories, and Mr. Hoover has made a discouraging statement on food prospects in Italy. Parliament, we trust, will be given a full picture of the world food situation before it is asked to acquiesce in a policy of doing nothing more about it.

American Labour Struggle

So far as labour-management conflicts are concerned, the United States is not out of the wood. Though the big strikes of the winter—notably those of the automobile and electrical workers—have been settled on the basis of an 18½ cent increase in hourly rates of pay, a stoppage of work in the bituminous coal mines is threatened this week-end. The issue is complicated by the fact that Mr. John L. Lewis, the mineworkers' leader, now returned to the A.F. of L. fold, is clearly making a bid to prove his militancy as a move in a campaign to discredit the rival Congress of Industrial Organisation, for whose creation he was himself originally responsible. In the C.I.O. itself there is also a struggle for control in progress. Mr. Reuther of the Automobile Workers' Union, who led the strike against General Motors, has secured the presidency of the Union against Mr. Thomas, the existing president, by the votes of a section which believes in industrial militancy but not in the politically Leftward trend of which the C.I.O. is accused by the A.F. of L. and Mr. Lewis. This struggle for power between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. is extending to Latin America. There the A.F. of L. is making determined efforts to disintegrate the Confederation of Labour, which is affiliated to the C.I.O.

Policies and Politics in France

With the date for the referendum on the constitution now provisionally set for May 25th, and with the general election to follow a fortnight later, the main political parties in France are already manoeuvring for position. Alive to the probability that they will be charged by the Communists with responsibility for the slow and halting progress of the nationalisation measures, and that the man in the street may visit on them his displeasure at the current programme of retrenchment and deflation, the Socialist Party's leaders appear to be increasingly anxious to maintain friendly relations with M.R.P. M. Gouin's emphasis, in his speech at Strasbourg last Sunday, on the continued need for "unity" indicated presumably his hope that a Coalition might be achieved after the elections. Meanwhile, the Socialist line is evidently to favour a conciliatory attitude towards Britain and America in the hope of securing such economic assistance as will enable M. Gouin to convince the electorate that his administration has been able to "deliver the goods." It was significant that the Prime Minister's speech did not repeat the familiar French thesis that the Ruhr must be detached from the Reich. France, he said, was entitled to, and would insist on, larger deliveries of Ruhr coal. But the only two conditions on which no compromise on the French side could be contemplated were international control of the Ruhr and a lengthy military occupation of Germany. This would appear to be a notable departure from previous French policy—motived, we presume, by a desire not to clash with Mr. Bevin on the question of the future control of Germany. It was notable, too, that in speaking of M. Blum's mission to Washington in search of dollar credits, M. Gouin emphasised the desire of France to revert to freedom of world trade. The French Communist Party is already declaring that the Socialists are on the way to becoming a middle-class reformist group barely distinguishable from British Liberals. This sort of attack was to be expected and should be discounted; it certainly does not correspond to the attitude of the French Socialist rank and file.

Mr. Bevan Reports

It was not to be expected that the housing returns for February—a short month, whose weather gave little scope for building—would give much indication of an increasing tempo in the housing campaign. Furthermore, there was only a trifling expansion during February in the aggregate building labour force; and, out of 410,000 workers in England and Wales, no fewer than 184,000 were still engaged in war damage repairs. The least satisfactory feature of the report is the lack of evidence that local authorities are going vigorously ahead with the preliminary work which is needed, if there is to be an adequate number of houses completed by the autumn. During the month, the figure of houses under construction, both permanent and temporary, rose by only 15,000, from 38,000 to 53,000; and, of these, 13,000 represented contracts in the hands of private builders. Still more disquieting is the fact that the total number of permanent houses for which local authorities had had tenders approved on February 28 showed an increase of only 12,000 in the month.

Bricks and Houses

Mr. Tomlinson was very candid when he reported to Parliament on Monday his difficulties in supplying the materials needed for the housing programme. He admitted the acute shortage, not only of bricks, but also of a wide range of other essential materials from pipes to heating appliances and from roofing slates to timber. He also admitted a serious breakdown in the supply of components for the temporary housing programme, and an unmanageable deficiency in the supply of workers both for the building industry and for the building material trades. Mr. Tomlinson has an unenviable task; for, though it is fair to lay a large part of the blame on the late Government for its entire failure to plan realistically the restoration of the supply of materials, it is impossible to resist the feeling that the muddle, or at any rate a part of it, still remains, and is likely to remain so long as the effective responsibility continues to be divided between three Ministries—Works, Supply and Health—each with its own set of civil servants, permanent or temporary, determined to follow their own methods and more than a little reluctant to collaborate cordially with the others. It was a mistake, when the Government was formed, not to clear up this Augean stable.

Man-power and Demobilisation

So far as the brick industry is concerned, labour shortage may be alleviated in time if the manufacturers accept the workers' demand for an increase of 13*s.* a week on the present basic wage of 82*s.* Something, too, may be done to increase output by the employment of German prisoners of war, particularly in the rehabilitation of a number of the small, old brick-fields which fell into disuse during the war. The fact remains, however, that there can be little hope of radical improvement in the productivity of essential industries until demobilisation proceeds much further. The latest Ministry of Labour return of man-power, relating to the end of January, shows that over 5,100,000 men and women were still employed in the Forces and Civil Defence or in the production of supplies and equipment for the Forces. As a result, though there were still a million more women employed than in 1939, the labour force available for civil production was still 2,100,000 below the pre-war level. In the face of these figures it is difficult to find justification for the slowing down (announced by Mr. Lawson on Tuesday) in the rate of demobilisation from 6,720 daily in March to an average of 4,700 daily in April and May.

Military Glasshouses

The report of the inquiry into the Stakehill Barracks, as summarised by Mr. Lawson in the House of Commons, suggests that there is nothing wrong about glasshouses except perhaps an absence of pretty pictures on the walls and a tendency on the part of Sergeant-Majors to raise their voice when addressing prisoners. The report is very good—in fact much too good. The Military Court which conducted the inquiry (with the help of a K.C. and a psychiatrist) failed to find any substantial truth in any of the allegations made by any of the numerous witnesses. As the enquiry was held in private, and the public knows nothing of the process by which all the allegations were disproved, we suspect that Mr. Lawson will have to be very clever if, as he suggests, he is going to "allay the disquiet of those members of the public and the House who feel there is still a cause for anxiety about the system of detention and the conduct of detention barracks." The Court found that, in spite of strong rumours to the contrary in the barracks, the suicides that occurred at Stakehill were really suicides. We are prepared to accept their verdict. But "domestic troubles," which were, we know, the cause of one suicide, can be either assuaged or aggravated by prison treatment. Mr. Lawson would surely have done better to state frankly that the men who get sent to glasshouses usually include some very tough criminals, that they are handed over to the care of N.C.O.'s picked for punitive duty, and that these N.C.O.'s are given what is in fact arbitrary power, since complaints against them are not generally entertained. The treatment is deliberately tough because the Army believes that there is no other way of dealing with recalcitrant soldiers. Perhaps Mr. Lawson, who in spite of this Report agrees that some reforms are required, is not really quite as simple-minded as his statement suggests.

Engineers' Wages

London engineers held a big demonstration last Sunday in support of the national demand for an increase of £1 a week in wages. All over the country, the unrest among the engineers is mounting fast, as wartime earnings drop away and troubles arise in connection with the re-conversion of the engineering group of industries to a peace-time basis. The troubles are the more acute because these industries have long suffered from an obsolete wage-structure, under which the wages paid have little relation to modern realities of skill and effort. This structure has been patched again and again, and during the war years it had to be patched more than ever, in order to give the highly skilled man some compensation for the fact that he could not, in the nature of things, increase his output as much as the workers on less difficult, mass-production jobs. The Unions, headed by the A.E.U., have been trying to work out a new wage system, based on the degree of skill required for handling different kinds of machines; but this is an exceedingly complicated problem, and in the meantime many workers find their pay-packets catastrophically reduced.

Who are the "Managers"?

For some time past, a group interested in the problems of management has been actively pressing for official recognition of its claims; and this has now been conceded by the promise to the new Institute of Management of a Treasury grant of £150,000 over the coming five years. With such a send-off, and every prospect of raising a good deal more in contributions from business firms, the Institute ought to be in a position to start in a considerable way. The great question is whether those who are in charge of it have really a clear and sensible conception of what they are setting out to do. It is pretty generally admitted that present standards of business management in Great Britain leave a good deal to be desired, and that the provision for training aspirants to become managers is almost non-existent. But is management to be regarded as a specialised profession for which training can be provided without regard to what the trainee is to manage when he has been trained. It can be granted that men who are excellent technicians often make very bad managers, and that everyone who takes on a managerial job would be the better for some training in the arts of management. But it does not follow from these propositions that it would be a good thing to divide technicians and managers into water-tight classes. The better remedy may be to provide training in *management* for all who need it, rather than to set out to train a separate profession of *managers*.

Atom-Bomb Rehearsal

"Operation Crossroads" has been postponed from the beginning of May to the middle of July: the 97 warships and the 4,000 sacrificial rats, goats and pigs have been reprieved for six weeks. The atomic Barnums of the U.S. Navy Department are apparently having difficulties in the staging of their "circus"; for, apart from the technical problems, they are on the horns of a dilemma. One of the objects of the demonstration is, of course, to impress Russia with the "terror" of the atomic bomb; the other, from the Navy Department's point of view, is to prove that it is not the end of navies. Theoretical physicists are scornful of the whole project. They say all the material results are calculable without spending £125,000,000 and clearing every island within hundreds of miles of the tests. A grim comment on our civilisation is that missions which went to tell the natives that they had been gloriously liberated from the Japanese had also to tell them that they were to be forcibly evacuated to save them from the atom-bombs of their liberators.

PARLIAMENT : Food and Flogging.

Wednesday

THE feeling is growing in the Parliamentary Labour Party that the Minister of Food should be rewarded for his efforts with a peerage. In the meantime, he has to defend himself on the floor of the Commons against an unappreciative Opposition. Fresh from his latest visit to Washington, Sir Ben Smith was greeted on Monday by a private notice question from Eden, asking him to explain conflicting reports from his Department about food. Instead of admitting the facts, Sir Ben denied the contradictions. Next day, he announced that his Department had, in fact, blundered. The Tories enjoyed a happy jeer.

"Food" is a Ministry by which Governments live or die, a Ministry in which a Labour Government can't afford to be weak. As a lynch-pin of the administration, a Food Minister must be far-sighted, sympathetic, a good organiser, a competent Parliamentarian and a member of the Cabinet. He may be bluff: but not all bluff. And he must make fewer mistakes than his colleagues, since the public may overlook the error of others, but will judge him with the prompt and infallible judgment of its belly.

The Tories who watch with a vulture-like greed to snap up instances of Government failure were at their most captious in the debate on Building Materials. Galbraith, the opener, said that the situation was not only unsatisfactory but deplorable. In his reply, George Tomlinson pointed out the difficulty of planning for the supply of materials, when he didn't know "the precise intentions in building for a long time ahead." If the Minister of Health doesn't state the target of houses, how can the Minister of Works set targets for building materials? Tory Bossom made a useful, down-to-earth builder's speech, while Derek Walker-Smith, whose manner is prematurely Ministerial, lectured George Tomlinson on bricklaying and made the proper point that the Government's success or failure with brick-making—a British industry dependent on British materials—will be a test of its organising ability. In an otherwise undistinguished speech, Orr-Ewing, Conservative Member for Weston-Super-Mare, made the somewhat remarkable statement that "I know quite well that some of the Ministers engaged in this matter (of building) are mad dictators." The House was so surprised that no one protested on a Point of Order.

The right to raise urgent matters on the adjournment has lost some of its value since Members now have to ballot for the opportunity. But the latest Adjournment debates, on Technical Education (Wells of Walsall, Labour), Road Accidents (Skeffington-Lodge of Bedford, Labour), and the Foreign Service (Warbey of Luton, Labour) show the range and importance of the subjects. Sometimes, as in the debate on Technical Education, which was nearly "counted out," the occasion is rather one for Parliamentary practice by younger Members. Blackburn, Cobb, John Haire, Benn Levy and Miss Herbison of North Lanark showed the refreshing mental liveliness which it was expected would be the great contribution of the new Labour members to the House but which has been half-smothered by the weight of formal legislation and Committee work.

Flogging in Trinidad, another adjournment debate, was a disappointment to amateurs of the curious. It brought an equally disappointing reply from Creech-Jones to Benson of Chesterfield, who raised the matter. Whatever else has fallen in output, the number of whippings in Jamaica and Trinidad has increased. John Paton, an old-fashioned Socialist who loves his fellow-men and believes in reason, denied that flogging—"this form of barbarity"—is a deterrent.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, to his credit, looked thoroughly unhappy in explaining why George Hall had agreed to allow flogging in Trinidad. He pointed out that "the Colonial Office is pursuing a constructive social policy . . . the occasion of crime becomes less and less . . . and the punishment complained of will be completely eliminated."

But what's going on anyway at the Colonial Office that makes it possible for Tories to champion native peoples against the Labour Government, and for Labour Ministers to champion the flogging of natives for stealing vegetables?

PHINEAS MINOR

THE DOCTORS AND THE PUBLIC

WHAT do the doctors want? That nobody yet knows, though we shall probably know a good deal better before Mr. Bevan's Health Bill gets into operation. Substitute, then, a less unanswerable question. What does the articulate minority that has taken charge, so far, of the doctors' case want, and hope to achieve, by the line it is taking up in relation to the Bill? It cannot be simply more money for the profession as a whole; there is every sign that the Government means to leave the B.M.A. with no plausible ground for complaint on that account. Money, of course, does enter into the question, but not mainly as a matter either of the amount of compensation to be paid as the surrender value of the goodwill of private practices, or of the rates of remuneration of doctors under the new health service. The money side of the question is something different from either of these. A section of the medical profession strongly dislikes the idea of being no longer able to create a substantial capital asset by building up a practice and of having no longer the chance of building up a really big income as a consultant. The commercially successful among the doctors, and those who cherish hopes of becoming commercially successful, naturally dislike anything calculated to make medicine less of a business and more of a profession in which money-making is reduced to a secondary role.

To state this is enough to make it clear that money plays only a small part in the present case of the doctors against the Government—though it may have played a larger part at an earlier stage, before the generosity of the Government's financial intentions had been made known. For clearly only a small proportion of medical men either are, or in their hearts expect ever to be, near the top of the commercial tree. Such men may, and indeed probably do, carry a weight out of proportion to their numbers; but they could not hope to swing a representative gathering if there were not other strong grounds of appeal. These other grounds are usually stated in terms of vigorous objection to bureaucratic control, and especially to control by local authorities; and they are often summed up in an objection to salaried, as opposed to fee-getting, practice. To many doctors—even to a good many panel doctors—a salary feels like a professional come-down in comparison with a fee, or even a capitation fee. It seems somehow to be less "professional."

Now this, when one comes to think about it, is rather strange. In the higher ranges of the teaching profession it is just the other way round. It is much more respectable to be a salaried University don than a private coach, or to serve at a salary in a public school than to conduct a private school for profit. Lawyers, no doubt, feel like doctors; but clergymen, to take the other great traditional profession, have always regarded a stipend as preferable to sending the hat round after the sermon. These differences are pointed out, because they are relevant as showing that the objection felt by many G.P.s to a salary is a matter of tradition much more than of reason—even apart from the fact that a large body of doctors engaged in other kinds of medical work, mainly of more recent growth, are by no means prejudiced against a salary, or against full-time employment by a public body.

It is not, of course, entirely a matter of salaries *versus* fees. If it were, the prejudices of the traditionalists would hardly make headway against the desire of many of the younger doctors for a chance of a good, secure income without any need to put down (probably borrowed) capital in order to buy a practice. The fear of bureaucracy is also real, and would be worthy of respect if there were in fact any danger of it—or, at any rate, of more of it than is inevitably involved in any plan to provide a comprehensive medical service for the people. But, as the Government's Bill stands, the danger of bureaucracy, national or local, has surely been reduced to a minimum. The interests of the training hospitals have been guarded with scrupulous care—to the extent of taking them, administratively, right out of the regional set-up. The Regional Hospital Boards and the local Hospital Management Committees have been given a very high degree of autonomy including actual immunity from control by the local authorities. The general practitioner's services are to be under Executive Committees of which half the membership is to be strictly professional, the other half being made up partly of local authority representatives and partly of persons nominated by the Minister of Health. The new Health Centres are indeed to be built and carried on by the local authorities—Counties and County Boroughs—but the G.P. services conducted at the Centres, as well as elsewhere, are to be controlled by the Executive Committees constituted in the way just described, and not by the local authorities. The G.P.'s contract is to be in all cases with the Executive Committee, and not with the local authority. The patients are to retain choice of doctors; and the doctors are still to be allowed to take private patients, and the patients to employ privately doctors who are enrolled as practitioners under the public scheme. It is difficult to see how Mr. Bevan could have gone further towards meeting the anti-bureaucratic part of the doctors' case.

And yet, plainly a large number of doctors are not satisfied. What many of the critics wanted was, in fact, to preserve intact the principle of one medical service for the rich and another for the poor. They favoured a more comprehensive service, publicly financed, for poor patients, because they could not resist the evident medical necessity for it. But they wanted a strict income limit, and a retention of the method of private, fee-taking practice for all persons with incomes beyond that limit. As soon as the Government made clear its intention of providing an all-round service for all comers, this section of medical opinion became irreconcilable; it would have picked every possible hole in any "universal" scheme.

This is, indeed, the root of the matter; and on this issue we feel not the smallest doubt that the Government is in the right. It is simply past dispute that, as long as there exist side by side two alternative recognised medical services, one "free," in the sense of being paid for collectively, and the other paid for by individual fees, there will be discrimination in the quality and still more in the quantity of the service given. Probably, in a strictly medical sense, most doctors will try to give their poor patients as good advice as they give to their rich ones; but they will give the richer ones more time and politeness and more convenient attendance. Moreover, as long as only the poor get the "free" service what will be recommended as suitable in the way of institutional and specialist treatment, holidays, attendance, and appliances will in fact be governed by an unspoken qualification—"suitable *for poor persons*," and will be different from what will be recommended in similar cases to the well-to-do. To deny this is merely unrealistic; and it is certain that a service which is really for all will tend to be better in both quantity and quality than one confined by law to the poorer classes.

Many doctors do not mind this, because they regard it as entirely natural that the well-to-do, in medical as in other matters, should get better treatment than the poor. In the analogous case of the Education Bill, the continued independence of the "public" schools was defended on precisely the same basis of simple class assumption. Many young doctors are Socialists, and start out from a quite different set of assumptions about what is right; but most doctors of senior standing are not Socialists—far from it—and will take the class system for granted as the basis of their thinking.

If the Socialistic principle of the equal treatment of equal needs is to be applied anywhere, medicine is clearly one of the first fields in which it ought to be introduced. In many fields we can fairly salve our consciences, at any rate for the time being, by applying the principle of the "national minimum" below which no one is to be allowed to fall; we can tolerate large differences above the minimum. It does not so much matter, except in times of special scarcity, if some people eat too much, or have too many clothes, provided everybody has a tolerable allowance of these things. But in the case of medicine the minimum is bound to approximate to the standard; for medical attention, save in quite exceptional cases, is not a luxury but a need.

In view of this, the doctors, we feel sure, are fighting a losing battle. The Government cannot give way to an agitation which is essentially and at bottom an assertion of class privilege; and on such an issue it is pretty plain that a substantial majority of the electors are behind the Government. As for the B.M.A.'s threat to boycott the new national health service, we are unable to take it seriously. No doubt Mr. Bevan's Bill will be amended in detail before it becomes an Act, and perhaps improved. In general, however, we expect it to go through pretty much as it now stands, and to find most of the doctors fully prepared to work it when the time comes.

RUIN FACES GREECE

Athens, March 26th *By Cable*

"I'LL tell you what will happen in Greece. On March 31st we shall get a majority, and in six months we shall have the King back." It is one of the younger Populist candidates talking. "But why wait until September?" "Because," he said, "we shall need six months to exterminate the Communists and build up the secret police. There will be censorship, of course, but I'll let you get one or two messages through because I like you. Then, when we have everything nicely cleaned up, we will get the King back." And these people, don't forget, would look upon Sir Archibald Sinclair as a dangerous Communist and assassin.

The official manifesto of the Populist party—an extraordinary document of seventy-six pages full of references to morality and God and Fatherland—gives no hint of what a Royalist Government would mean; nor do the speeches of the party's official leaders. Take Mr. Mavromichalis. Mr. Mavromichalis is a charming old gentleman, who wears a monocle and lives in a house which has all the fascination of a period museum. Crowded on the walls are rows and rows of handsome ancestors who brandish swords, or stand alert and listening on lonely mountains like magnificent stags. Mr. Mavromichalis is very conciliatory. Yes, the Populist party was certainly in favour of the King. Its policy was to hold a plebiscite; but not unless the British agreed. Everything would be done decently. Even Mr. Tsaldaris, who is fiercer than Mavromichalis and usually much more indiscreet, was surprisingly mild. A Greek monarchy, he explained, would be like the Swedish or Danish brand, where the King had a Paraliament and worked in gentle harmony with the people.

But these men are puppets; it is the ferocious rank and file who matter. For months now the Royalist "X" organisation has been terrorising villages all over Greece, and, although Eam is using the same methods wherever it has a chance, most of the violence undoubtedly comes from the Right. The terror is now concealed: it will be open enough after the election, even if the trappings of democracy are retained. (In Monarchist circles, by the way, Royal dictatorship is known as "Crowned Democracy.") Even now, civil servants who are democrats are wondering how long they will keep their jobs. And every worker who does not vote on Sunday and has a blank on the voting card will be, in the eyes of many employers, a marked man.

Is there not a hope that the rank and file of Eam will ignore the orders of their leaders and vote for the more moderate Right candidates with the idea of keeping out the extremists? Is there not a possibility that Papandreou, who is now (ironically enough) the white hope of democracy, might be able to form a Government and curb the worst terrorism? That is what some of the more astute British officials would like. After two or three months of muddle and frustration, Parliament would be dissolved and there might be another election in which the Left would take part. After that, a new Government based on the real wishes of the people could be formed, and a new and fruitful period begin.

That, of course, is a possibility. (There is also another possibility, that Tito in the North may start some trouble.) But what makes this situation so explosive and dangerous is the economic crisis which is certain to come in a matter of weeks. To Englishmen arriving in Athens from London, the sight of all the food in the restaurants and shops induces the uncomfortable feeling of sin. This sprawling Turkish town has everything we dreamt of as we sipped our Crippsian arrowroot—cakes with cream and nuts, chocolate éclairs, shelves and shelves of them. There are toys, fountain pens, cameras, watches, cigarette lighters, eggs by the basketful, wines by the cask—all at fabulous prices, of course. But a visit to the slums of Piraeus, where people live on vegetables cooked in water instead of the usual oil, or a trip to the villages a few miles from Athens, where families I saw had been existing on the Unrra ration of flour for a month, soon disabuses one of the idea that there is no starvation in Greece. In remote villages, of course, conditions are worse. Unrra is doing magnificent work; without it half Greece would have perished by now. But the task is so immense, and distances so great, and destruction by the Germans so unnecessary and so ruthless, that Unrra cannot be expected to solve everything. Because of the cost of carriage, people in the hills sometimes have to pay more for their bread than a millionaire on the black market of Athens.

Bad as the food situation is now, it will be much more serious in April and May. The poor in Athens are to-day getting about 1,800 calories; during the next two months, before the harvest is gathered, they will be down to somewhere between 1,300 and 1,400, and it may be less. This starvation diet is bound to react on the economic situation. Even if the Right had the support of the workers—and they can expect nothing but enmity—production would inevitably fall in April and May, when the economic crisis will reach a peak. Trade has improved a little since the currency was stabilised, but output is still only about 30 per cent. of the pre-war level. The textile industry and the large fertiliser and glass factory at Piraeus are almost back to normal, but other industries are only just ticking over. The engineering trade, for instance, is down to about 15 per cent of the pre-war level, and the cement industry would have collapsed altogether the other day if the British Economic Mission had not asked the Greek Government to place an order. ("What shall we do with it?" they said—in a country with some two thousand destroyed villages.) As for the currency, nobody knows how long the gold in the Bank of Greece can last; but obviously the British loan of £10 million, plus the gold the Greeks can mobilise abroad, is not inexhaustible. Money is not circulating: all that is happening is that, when a Greek merchant sells something, he turns his money proceeds into gold. It is estimated that there are three million gold sovereigns hidden away in Greece—the equivalent of £20 million sterling.

Any Government which came into power in April would have an appallingly difficult problem to solve. The Right, which has no economic policy, are defeated before they begin. They cannot master the situation without controls, and they do not believe in controls. They cannot and will not create an efficient civil service for the same reason. They cannot get national unity because they will have the workers implacably against them. They cannot balance the budget because their rich backers will not stand for the heavy taxation which is necessary. When the Right gets into power, the British Economic Mission will clearly have to intervene more and more to save the situation; but the difficulties of working with such mulish partners, while "X" bands are using knout and whip on the workers, appear insuperable.

It is very noticeable that the Communists are the only people on the Left who are cheerful nowadays. Things are working out very nicely for them. Whether the Populists are returned with a clear majority, or whether Papandreou or some other "moderate" can form a Government, is ultimately of no importance. The crisis will get them in the end. Violence will breed violence and terrorism will make converts from that mass of distracted people who believe in neither extreme. Nor do the Communists think the Right will be able to bring the King back. The international wind is no longer blowing in favour of Fascism, whether based on monarchy or the Fuehrer principle. This is not 1933. (How surprised Mavromichalis would be if somebody told him!) Despite the terrorism which is bound to increase after the elections, even if Sophoulis were Premier, the Communists believe that both the Right and the British will be involved in the common ruin in three to six months from now. They have only to wait and endure.

For that reason it seems to me most unlikely that there will be any trouble either before the election or immediately afterwards. It would not be to the advantage of the Communists. But if Britain, out of weakness and panic, were to connive at the return of the King, it would be almost impossible to stop a new civil war. It would not begin as it did before with sudden explosive risings in towns and villages. Men would drift away to the hills and join thousands there already in hiding; arms would be sent over the border, and Greece would become another of the dangers to Peace.

We once had an intelligible solution to the Greek problem. Even after the civil war our prestige remained remarkably high, and, although it shrank in the next few months, there was still enough good will to make it possible for the British Labour Party to build up a Centre Government based on economic as well as political reality. To-day, our friends in Greece are disillusioned, and we are setting off on a new path which can bring nothing but danger.

HUGH MASSINGHAM

A LONDON DIARY

MR. Churchill is one of the most ingenious, as well as unscrupulous, of politicians. So I suppose he will find something to say when he is reminded in the House of Commons that he was himself one of the authors of the settlement of Eastern Europe which he now so eloquently attacks. Both in December, 1944 and in February, 1945, he not only defended the not unreasonable arrangement by which the Russians took East Poland and the Poles East Prussia, but supported the absurdity of the Poles taking Germany up to the Oder and Neisse. Worse still, he spoke strongly about the "broad justice" of the "total expulsions of the Germans" from the whole confiscated area! Yet the other day, in his Missouri speech, he said that:

> The Russian-dominated Polish Government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany, and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and undreamed of are now taking place.

I suppose the explanation of this almost incredible change of face is that in 1944–1945, Mr. Churchill was still fighting the Nazis; now, as if to drain to the very dregs the urn of bitter prophecy, he and the class he represents are

swinging round again, as they did last time, to a pro-German and anti-Soviet view. It follows, of course that what was right yesterday is wrong to-day and what is right to-day was an atrocity yesterday.

* * *

No wonder that observers from Germany say that Nazis are optimistic about their future. With the Russians wantonly antagonising the West, and Britain and America becoming daily more anti-Soviet, the set-up is working nicely to the pattern laid down by the late Dr. Goebbels. Not only have the Nazis the example of Mr. Churchill weeping over Germany's wrongs to comfort them for expulsions from official jobs, but they have the presence in Eastern Europe of Foreign Office and State Department officials to whom it has never even occurred, apparently, that we are allies of the Soviet Union. What fun for the waiting Nazis to read the heroic announcements of men like Mr. Earle, American representative at Sofia, that America ought at once to drop a few atomic bombs on Russia if she rejects an ultimatum to withdraw! Any visitor can hear this kind of talk any day in official American and British circles in Warsaw, Budapest, Sofia or Bucharest. The thought that its effect is to justify aggressive tendencies in Soviet mentality, and that if the policy were actually carried out its inevitable result would be that Russia would on a future occasion unexpectedly wipe out our cities, does not occur to Mr. Earle and his like. America could be asked to disgorge her (last century) acquisitions in Texas, California and New Mexico, while atomic bomb threats could, with the same justice, be used to make Britain withdraw from territory in many parts of the world. Why do Mr. Stettinius and Mr. Bevin put up with such dangerous and unrepresentative officials?

* * *

When I was in Serbia last November, I made some enquiries about Mihailovich. Yes, he was still at large, hiding in the woods of Bosnia. No one knew just how many followers he still had; but the number was small and he remained at large for the same reason that Partisans escaped capture for years, though Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Ustashi and Chetniks all combed the countryside for them. It is very difficult to round up a small body of men in wild mountain wooded country. Now that Mihailovich has been captured, I hope the evidence against him will be brought out in a way that convinces the non-Slav world. A book with the documented case against Mihailovich was on sale when I was in Belgrade; I know several people, including British officials, who have examined the documents and confirm the account of Mihailovich's contact with the Germans. A summary of the allegations appeared in this journal (Jan. 27th, 1945) in an article by Mr. Pribichevich (one of the editors of *Fortune*). But there are many people here who are not yet convinced of Mihailovich's guilt, and it is true that the full story has not been told in an authoritative or conclusive form. That he worked with the Italian Fascists; that he did not fight against the Germans (except in the first weeks); that he fought bitterly against the Partisans—these are undeniable facts. But we need the full documentation and especially the proof of the alleged meeting of Mihailovich with Herr Staerker on Nov. 16th, 1944, in the village of Badovinsti.

* * *

Referring to the surprising sentence of ten years passed by a court martial at Singapore on a man named Cymbalist, one of the ringleaders of the R.A.F. strikes, an N.C.O. writes suggesting that something is very wrong about current military punishments. He encloses a list of recent sentences which have been published in Unit Orders in Germany, presumably as a deterrent. They include the following:

Stealing property of a civilian. 4 years penal servitude.
Disobedience, 3 years pena servitude.
Striking his Superior Officer, 3 years penal servitude.
Leaving his Post without Orders, 3 years penal servitude.
Two days late from Brussels leave, 2 years I.H.L. (Hard Labour).
Stealing 1 box of compo rations, 1 year I.H.L.
Stealing a quantity of petrol, 12 months I.H.L.
Improperly selling Public Property (1 leather jerkin), 8 months I.H.L.

I am not surprised that my correspondent says that the actual effect is not so much to deter as to produce a "sheep and lamb attitude."

* * *

Mr. Winant has no imitators or rivals. I have never heard of another Ambassador who worked unceasingly to the complete neglect of what is usually regarded as the indispensable social side of his job. Almost everyone in this country knows his name and respects him as "a great American" and as one of the "best friends" this country has ever had. Yet very few people have seen him, and those who have heard him speak would not give him high marks as an orator. I saw a good deal of him at one time during the war and, like everyone else, was immensely impressed. The appointment of Mr. Winant at a critical time here, when America's former Ambassadors had been men as unsuitable as Mr. Bingham and Mr. Kennedy, was one of the most popular and sensible things that Mr. Roosevelt ever did.

* * *

Lord Ponsonby was one of the kindest, most honest, most cultivated and amusing of men. I recall him in private life, whimsically but seriously discussing politics with the Webbs at Passfield Corner, and in public, most clearly, at Labour Party Conferences, where he made Pacifism sound reasonable. For politically he was much more a Pacifist than a Socialist—a fact that the B.B.C. disingenuously covered up. His best known works were not his charming books on English Diaries, but *Truth in War Time* and *Now is the Time*. His pacifist propaganda in the Twenties was the forerunner of Dick Sheppard's famous post-card campaign. Ponsonby's approach to the problem of war was more seductive than either the religious or the economic. It was the ghastly absurdity of war that he stressed. It never accomplishes the ends for which it is normally fought, and its result is universal misery and spiritual degradation. Ponsonby used to explain this kind of thing with a quiet wit that went over with the Labour Party Conference quite as effectively as the grandiose appeals of the tub-thumpers.

* * *

Do doctors realise that under the new Health Bill they will never again have bad debts? This is quite a consideration. A doctor friend reckons that between 25 and 30 per cent. of a doctor's bills are never collected, either because he forgets to send them out, because patients move away or are dishonest, or because, for the honour of his calling, he is expected to treat, say, an accident victim, whether he is likely to be paid or not. The panel guaranteed his income from insured patients, but if he was called in to treat the panel patient's family he could not be sure of payment. Now everybody is included and there is no longer any need for dunning letters, bill-collectors, or devices like sickness clubs or the so-called "Public Medical Services" (backed by the B.M.A.) by which patients could privately insure with a group of local doctors.

* * *

At Wednesday's meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party Mr. Bevin read a carefully prepared defence of his whole foreign policy and demanded a vote of confidence. As there are only a mere handful of Labour M.P.s who want Mr. Bevin to resign, his "overwhelming victory" was a foregone conclusion. The important thing was his wise change of tactics. He no longer denounced the eighty M.P.s who signed the now famous Union of Democratic Control document on Greece as the tools of a Red plot, but dealt quietly and respectfully with their arguments. The net result was greatly to strengthen and increase the prestige of the External Affairs Committee of the Labour Party.

* * *

For the first time for years I listened on a recent Sunday afternoon to the Marble Arch orators. They seemed to me not up to the old standard; at least, I heard no speaker comparable to the superb actor, whose name I forget, who used to explain, amid torrents of laughter, just how the gold-standard really worked. The biggest crowds last Sunday were gathered round an Irishman describing the rule of the Ulster Gestapo and the Indian who spoke from the platform of the Revolutionary Communist Party. This party is regarded as Trotskyite by Stalinists, but I wonder whether in the conditions of India to-day the two may not once more join forces. One never knows. Near by a tightly packed group argued with a sharp-tongued Salvation lass and a larger crowd found it funny to be told by an earnest preacher that by listening to him and failing to accept the word of God they were every moment stoking up for themselves hotter fires in hell than would be theirs if they stayed away in pagan ignorance. A handsome gentleman representing the Society for the Evangelicising of London (I think I've got the title right) was spreading the gospel to three listeners, but a considerable crowd was carrying on a lively argument with the exposition of Catholic Evidence. Another religious speaker was telling Atheists that they were cowardly not to anticipate the missionaries in converting the heathen to Atheism. Some soldiers were ruffled by an orator who kept repeating that no one could make a man fight if he didn't want to. The only other stands I recall belonged to the anarchists. One of them spoke to three people and the other, while I watched, to no one at all. Americans, who often find Hyde Park oratory an impressive institution, might gather, correctly I think, that the London public nowadays has no particular grudge against the State and, profoundly irreligious itself, regards religion as the ideal subject for good-tempered argument.

CRITIC

APRIL FOLLY

(*After William Watson*)

APRIL, April,
Laugh thy fiscal laughter;
Then, the morning after
Weep thy fiscal tears!
April in arrears,
Flee the tax-collector,
Tell the tax inspector
All thy Budget fears.
April, April,
Laugh thy fiscal laughter;
But, the morning after,
Weep thy fiscal tears.

April, April,
"Tax relief" is folly,
Better melancholy
Than this laughter daft.
I can see thee, sweeting,
Next December meeting
Springtime's overdraft.
April, April,
"Tax relief" is folly,
Better melancholy
Than this laughter daft.

April, April,
Mortgaged willy nilly,
They will soak thee, silly!
Stop thy loony laugh.
Last straws budgetary,
Like loads camels carry,
Break the back.
April, April,
Mortgaged willy nilly,
They will soak thee, silly!
Stop thy loony laugh!

SAGITTARIUS

BACKGROUND TO MUTINY

WHEN the Indian Navy mutinied in the roadsteads of Bombay and Karachi, what were the grievances that drove it to revolt? Like the British sailors who mutinied at the Nore during the Napoleonic Wars, their first complaint was that their food was bad and insufficient. Secondly, they were sore, because they have discovered how pitifully low is the scale of their pay, allowances and pensions, when compared with those of the British forces. Finally, these sailors are expecting early demobilisation and the prospect fills them with dread. A few weeks earlier, part of the British air force in India also went "on strike." But they did it to hasten the process of demobilisation. There you have the contrast that goes to the roots of this Indian crisis. The British airmen are eager to return to civil life, because they know that work and a welcome await them, under a Government of their own choice. Indians mutiny because they have no trust in their foreign rulers.

It was under Communist instigation and against the pleading of the High Command of Congress that all Bombay took part in a *hartal* (general strike) to support the naval mutineers. What was in the mind of the masses as they formed their prohibited processions, erected flimsy barricades and faced the guns of the British troops? Doubtless they felt for the sailors the same romantic sympathy which leads them to idealise the soldiers of the I.N.A., Subhas Bose's army. These men, with however little prospect of success, dared to revolt with arms in their hands. Given this volcanic mood, an occasion for a display of anger is never far away. At Delhi, the other day, it was the pomp of the victory celebrations that infuriated the hungry masses, after the cutting of their food rations. But in Bombay the rioting went far beyond a mere political demonstration. Food shops were looted and banks attacked.

To grasp the meaning of this momentary lapse into anarchy, one must visualise the physical misery of this overcrowded city. Its population has doubled during the war. In the dungeons of its slum-tenements two shifts of tenants sleep by turns on the floor, one by day, the other by night. On the pavements of its streets, amid the din of the traffic, thousands of homeless workers spend the night under a covering of sacking. And now the hectic demand for labour that brought these wretches from their villages has shrunk with the coming of peace. A sense of insecurity darkens the outlook not merely of the serviceman awaiting demobilisation, but of the war-workers also. They are facing unemployment in a land that knows nothing of doles or Beveridge plans. They might return to their villages, but there parched fields and withered crops would await them and the shadow of famine.

In a crowded office of the Provincial Government of Bombay, I realised what is coming. It was a Labour Exchange and resettlement bureau set up for the benefit of the 50,000 soldiers and the 300,000 war-workers who will soon be disbanded in this province. In mountainous piles stood the applications. Beside them, a barely perceptible molehill, lay the register of the demand. The number of men for whom places had actually been found averaged eighty in each month. In Calcutta I found that, during six months, work had been found for only one applicant in ten. From all the talk of planning for the building of roads and dams, nothing concrete had as yet emerged, largely because experienced clerks of works were lacking. No land has yet been found in Bombay Province on which peasant-soldiers could be settled.

The officials with whom I talked put their reliance on private enterprise. Assuredly there is a case for an immense expansion of Indian industry. British policy, from the days of the East India Company onwards, has checked its development with such jealousy that there is not yet in the whole Peninsula a single plant capable of manufacturing an internal combustion engine of any kind. Apart from this, building should be starting afresh, while the Indian market for consumers' goods, starved during six years of war, should be stimulating industry to expand. The expansion does not happen, and when one asks for the reason, the answers point to no early remedy. Idle capital there is in plenty, some of it the fruit of shameless profiteering. Much of it is hoarded to evade income-tax; much is used in speculation. Even the little man has been thrifty, as the balance-sheets of the savings banks show. But this idle capital does not find an outlet in the expansion of private industry, for the obvious reason that the investor lacks confidence in the future. One does not build a new factory on the slopes of an active volcano. No one can guess what the next six months will bring forth, and the first question the average Indian puts to a travelling Englishman is apt to be: "Will it be a blood-bath?"

The other outstanding reason is more technical but equally paralysing. Everyone knows that India is clamouring for new machinery. This does not mean merely the equipment necessary for expansion and for the creation of new industries. It means, above all in textiles, the urgent replacement of worn-out machines. Once more politics intrude. Britain cannot supply these machines, nor could she do so for an incalculable time ahead, even if shipping were available. But the tight control of the exchange places difficulties in the way of purchase from America. The result is that Indians hoard their capital, nurse their grievance and feel that they are still the subjects of a colonial empire.

There is yet another factor that will hamper private enterprise, when export can be resumed. As an inadequate measure of the inflation, one may cite the official index of food prices, which now stands at 244, compared with 100 in September 1939. The rupee, none the less, is kept at the old parity. This means that it is grossly over-valued and that in consequence the export of Indian goods will be severely handicapped.

It is easy to speculate on the measures a progressive Indian Government would adopt—if India had a Government. What she has is a council of caretakers, who possess neither moral authority nor prestige. They face twice or thrice in a week a vote of censure in the Legislative Assembly, while in the lobbies the Members speculate on the chances of the formation of a representative National Government within a month or two. If it can be formed, it will presumably set going constructive works of development in volume sufficient to re-employ the disbanded soldiers and war-workers and to restore a mood of optimism and confidence. There are some easy things it could do—the reconditioning of irrigation tanks, and the boring of wells. Its big opportunity would come from the project already surveyed, thanks to Mr. Casey, for the taming of the Damodar river on Tennessee Valley lines. There are other undisciplined Indian rivers that call as urgently for flood-control and promise as much for irrigation and hydro-electric power. Economists believe that a development loan could be raised, at a low rate of interest, if a National Government were to appeal to patriotic motives. Economics and politics in this passionate hour of crisis are inextricably interwoven. To-day the eloquence and magnetism of Jawaharlal Nehru must be used to persuade the masses of Bombay to stop rioting. Will he have his chance to-morrow to turn this emotional people with equal zest to the saving work of construction?

The spectre of famine poses the same political problem. What Nature has done to test the social consciousness of the Indian nation is visible to any traveller's eyes. Day after day as the train crossed the plains of the Punjab and the Ganges Valley, I stared at pitiable crops and wondered how many of these fields will be worth the labour of reaping. In these normally fertile areas there will be no famine, but can any surplus be drawn from them for the still more severely stricken areas of the West and South? Over India as a whole, the harvest of grains available for human food amounts in a normal year to fifty million tons: this year there is a deficiency of seven millions. If every ton of this harvest could be evenly distributed over the whole Peninsula, the shortage would be just endurable: there would be food for six days of the week, but not for seven. But such calculations imply an unattainable level of efficiency in procurement and distribution. The ration of cereal food all over India has been cut from 16 oz. to 12 oz., which gives a daily allowance of only 1,500 calories. For heavy manual workers the old allowance will be retained. But confidence there is none, neither in the Ministers at the top, nor in the ill-paid local officials at the bottom. The Bengal famine has left behind it its lurid memories of incompetence, profiteering, and corruption. The peasant expects to be robbed and he believes that the grain he surrenders to the procurement agents may rot where it is stored—a thing that did occasionally happen. The result is that he will hoard—not from greed but from fear. The best hope lies in the prospect that in eight of the eleven provinces Congress administrations will be in office before the end of April. They will be trusted and obeyed, though they will have to use the defective machine that functions on the lower administrative level. But an All-Indian shortage can be fought only by a National Government. Unless it can be constituted within a month or two, there is no power that can save this people from anarchy and famine. It is not the rifles of the police but the moral authority of Congress that just avails to check the revolutionary mood of the masses. If Congress should despair of a political settlement, the volcano will erupt.

Calcutta. H. N. BRAILSFORD
March 14th

BUTLINEERING

WHEN you alight from the motor coach in which you have driven to your Butlin camp, you will be shown to your chalet, complete with wash-basin and running water and furnished with a comfortable bed, a wardrobe, dressing chest and flowered chintz curtains. Round the door roses grow. At Skegness there are over two thousand of these chalets. For your lunch, which you will eat in a dining-room containing about one thousand fellow lunchers, you might in peace-time have enjoyed roast leg of lamb and mint sauce, beans, roast and/or boiled potatoes, and fruit tart and custard. In the afternoon you could have played tennis, bathed in the enclosed swimming pool or in the sea, boated on the artificial lake, played clock golf or bowls, or ridden horses along the private sands. You could, even, have read books or written letters in the lounge. For dinner you would have had soup, cold salmon and cucumber, blancmange and cheese, and Jovial Joe, the cook, fresh from supervising his dozen assistant chefs in the kitchen, would have been walking the rounds of the diners to see that you have what you like and are enjoying what you have.

After dinner you could play table tennis or billiards on one of the twelve tables, drink and make merry in one of the three lounge bars, in the Pig and Whistle "a perfect reproduction of an Olde English Inne" or, in the modern bar "a handsome affair of chromium and black"; or you could dance till the small hours and so to bed in your chalet. In the morning you could attend physical culture classes, "perhaps the only such classes in England to be marked by constant laughter," go to the gym where you could wrestle or box or hand the medicine ball and then, after your hot bath—you could have one free whenever you liked—and your morning coffee, permanently on tap, go shopping in the shopping centre full of "charming little stores." And so on throughout the week with concerts and fancy dress carnivals

and amateur theatricals to mark the highlights and the gala nights—yet every night, it seems, is a highlight and a gala night. On Sunday morning there would have been an open air service "quite often with a Bishop" who "will not quibble if you come in shorts," and the town band.

Throughout the week a staff of twenty experts will have been in constant attendance upon you to "keep things moving, keep everyone happy," so that, arriving a stranger on Saturday, you may "wonder on Tuesday how you have come to know so many people."

What more can you want? Many would say much more or, rather, much less. They would complain that the *raison d'être* of a Butlin camp is to enable you to do everything in a crowd; that never for a moment would you be left to your own devices or thrown upon your own resources, that the merriment is artificial, the joviality forced. They might, for example, animadvert upon the punctuation of the meals by the periodic appearances of a gentleman upon the stage who jollies up the diners through a megaphone: "Hi de hi," he says, to which it is a point of honour for every diner to reply in unison with "Ho de ho"; or upon the appearance of an hilariously greeted George, complete with dustpan and broom, on the all too frequent occasions when objects edible or otherwise are dropped or lost. Asserting that they wish to be able to read, to lounge, to climb, to wander, to ramble, to bathe with a few chosen friends or with a lover, or to enjoy a green thought alone in a green shade, these will denounce Mr. Butlin and all his works as the type and the symbol, at once the reflection and the prop of an age of trivial herding, in which all must enjoy themselves in the same way at the same time, and even pleasure must be mass produced.

I think that they are wrong. If they are merely saying "I wouldn't like this sort of thing myself," well and good; it isn't my cup of tea either. But I don't see why one should erect one's personal likes and dislikes into criteria of moral and aesthetic value. We shouldn't accept the utter boredom which *our* ways of spending our leisure would engender in most people as a ground for imputing moral, social or aesthetic depravity to ourselves, still less as a reason for altering our habits; after all, we are under no obligation to go Butlineering.

There are, however, those who hold that a Butlin holiday, the holiday in a crowd, is a bad thing in itself. These I would ask to consider the matter not from the standpoint of their own cultivated and enlightened leisure-using, but from that of the holidays that Mr. Butlin is superseding.

The old-fashioned working or lower middle class holiday was often a dreadful thing. A little family bloc was dumped down in a couple of back rooms in a back street; the sea was half a mile away and out of view; there was no company but their wearisome own, and with that they were bored to tears; the wife nagged, the children whined, while the husband lounged and yearned after the girls on the prom. Or the whole family sat listlessly on the beach. An ill-tempered landlady provided bad food, badly cooked, and when it was raining there was nothing to do but sit in the bedroom. If the family went to a cheap boarding house, they were turned out to fend for themselves, rain or no rain.

It is against this background that the Butlin camp with its varied assortment of pleasures must be viewed. Butlin describes himself as a man who for years "has set himself to study the needs of people with time to occupy in pleasurable relaxation." I think his claim is just. It was, for example, a stroke of genius to fix a single inclusive charge to cover all the amenities of a Butlin camp, from chalets to carnivals, from the garage to the dance hall—all except horse-riding at 2*s*. 6*d*. an hour and drinks. Three pounds a week was the inclusive fee before the war, except in August and at the end of July, when it was three pounds ten shillings.

Nor are the pleasures purely passive. The camp aims at the development and expression of personality. There are games and competitions, there are amateur theatricals, there are discussions and debates, there is the self-government of communities by their members. Men and women whose lives are spent in monotonous routine jobs experience for the first time on these holidays the joy of the awakened mind, the exercised talent and the pouring out of energy in vivifying initiative and strenuous endeavour. They do not all passively receive; they actively contribute, and so contributing find the outlet for personality which their working lives deny.

As I write, a controversy has broken out over the camp at Pwllheli. This was built for the Admiralty in 1940 by Messrs. Butlin with a proviso that within a specified time after the end of the war Butlin should buy it back. The camp would accommodate 4,000 holiday makers. Now that the end of the war has come, the local authorities, the Caernarvonshire County Council, the Rural District Council and the Local Planning Authority are all opposing its reversion to the purpose for which it was originally intended. They propose that it should be used as a residential school and are much supported by country lovers and coast preservers. This is a lovely district and enlightened people generally are rumbling with apprehension, as if they were the national bowels, at the destruction of yet another stretch of coastline. "We don't object to Butlin camps," they say in effect. "Who are we to interfere with the pleasures of the people? But why just here? Why not at Southend or Colwyn Bay?"

To this also Mr. Butlin has, as it seems to me, an answer. It is that the campers too should have the chance of qualifying for the superior holiday of the beauty and solitude lovers. Why, he asks, in effect, should Butlineers who look at bricks and concrete all the year round be required to look at the bricks of Southend and the concrete of Colwyn Bay all their holidays? Why should they not look at Snowdon? There is a magnificent view of it, by the way, from the Pwllheli camp.

"You say it is a good thing that men should learn to love natural beauty. Well I," says Mr. Butlin, "am helping them. You cannot, after all, jump overnight from the Southend holiday in a mob to the mountain holiday with two or three. You must first be given the opportunity to see mountains and then perchance you may feel their spell and learn to love them. Well, my Pwllheli camp performs the office of a kindergarten for future mountaineers. There is the view of the Snowdonian range opening out every morning to greet them when they get up, and, if they desire to improve the acquaintance, there are motor coaches to take them into the mountains."

I can see no answer to this argument; for how, one may ask, are the dwellers in Bootle who are also the holiday makers of Blackpool to see natural beauty? How, as they live their ordinary lives of work and of play, are they to come by the chance to discover whether their eyes will open to it or not? Mr. Butlin gives them that chance. If the eyes of only one in ten, nay of one in twenty, are opened, then his camp and all that it stands for are justified.

To this argument, the imaginary argument which I have put into Mr. Butlin's mouth, I add another. Our generation has seen the ruination of miles of English coastline by a scurf of unplanned building, congealing here and there into blobs of special horror in the shape of caravans, shacks, hutments, tin sheds, railway carriages and old buses, clustered in the fields and on the cliff top. Despite all the official assurances that this time things are going to be different, we fear that, once holidays get under way, the horror will recur and increase. You don't like the look of a Butlin camp? Perhaps not; but it *does* canalise and concentrate, gathering together in a single bloc 4,000 persons, some of whom would otherwise straggle in long lines of frowsy bungalows and ambiguous con-urbanisations along many miles of coast. The camps, in short, perform the same office as a drainage system. Just as a sewage farm accumulates and concentrates refuse and prevents it from spreading, so does the camp concentrate those very elements whose unchecked spread would overwhelm the coastline.

But I add one proviso. The right of free access to the sea and free passage along coastguard paths has been filched from the British public in too many places and should be everywhere restored. A free footpath along the coast must be provided through Mr. Butlin's Pwllheli camp.

Whether we like it or not Butlinism has come to stay and to grow. On balance, I suggest we should be grateful, grateful to the man who has done more to increase the happiness of his fellow citizens than any of us, and in making the millions happy, has helped to bring a few, a very few, under the spell of natural beauty.

C. E. M. JOAD

MR. PRIESTLEY'S NEW PLAY

MR. Priestley is a professional artist. If the London theatre is so constipated by success that it cannot find room for him, he does not repine; he writes a play in, to, about and for the most perfect provincial playhouse in Britain. Suffused by the sacred odour of an ancient stage, with an atmosphere of venerable winches and lofty whitewashed tiring rooms at the back, and a magic little auditorium in front, all dim gold and willow-leaf green, some modern plays—including some of Mr. Priestley's—would seem as out of place in the little Bristol theatre as a photograph pinned on a painting. But *Jenny Villiers* might have been exhaled from its walls.

The successful author is rehearsing his play at a local Theatre Royal. He feels that the stage is dying, or at any rate that it has turned into an eccentric and old-fashioned ancestor of up-to-date radio and film. In the shadows of the historic green-room, he encounters Jenny, a young actress from the past, who died before her gift was fully revealed. Her spirit revives his belief.

As an established author, Mr. Priestley has earned the honour of being made the object of a stock judgment. He is said to be "obsessed with time." He might say that it is we who are under its domination, if like Archbishop Leighton we can describe time only in terms of a baron of beef, from which slices must be cut in one predestinate order. By liberating us from the conception of time as something which is chipped off for us, second after second, on our watches, Priestley achieves one great object of the dramatist by liberating our conception of people. We see action and character extending beyond itself into the past and the present.

This story of Victorian actors and a Steerforth betrayal is not Major British Drama. However many dimensions are brought into play, a perspective view remains a view from a distance. It is charming, and charming in a profound way, if that is possible. Its faults, too, are not unpleasing. It seems only four-fifths finished, with final cuts and roundings-off omitted, but I understand that the limited resources available led to many modifications being made.

There is some unnecessary duplication of characters. The young man who cares for the Author's health has a double. One has the impression that there is more than one Crabb Robinson character making notes on Jenny for posterity. But this handicap is slight in a company of players which have so successfully overcome such honourable impediments as youth and war service. Admirable performers such as Mr Cunningham, Mr. Connor, Mr. Willman and Miss Brook are led by Pamela Brown and William Devlin. Mr. Devlin, combining grace with the firmness and strength of a whole playful of Galsworthy characters, defines the limits where past and present meet. Miss Brown perfectly suggests the great actress in her immaturity, radiant with performance still to come.

STEPHEN POTTER

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RADIO NOTES

As a result of my appeal for a reissue of *World Radio* I have been sent a copy of *Micro Magazine*, which is the official publication of the Belgian national broadcasting system. This is quite a sumptuous production, well printed on good paper, very clear in the layout and lavishly illustrated; what is more, it does not confine itself to the schedules of the Belgian national and regional stations, but gives full information of programmes from Denmark, France, Great Britain, Holland, Luxembourg and Switzerland. If a country like Belgium, struggling to recover from the results of the German occupation, can do as well as this, is there any reason why we should not do rather better here?

The results of the monopoly enforced by the B.B.C. are not always so apparent. The journalist whose article is refused by one paper has a good chance of getting it accepted by another. One of the reasons why such writers are reluctant to enter the field of radio is that if their scripts are rejected they have no alternative but to throw them into the fire. And since a 20-30-minute broadcast may take a good deal longer to write than the average magazine article, the dead loss entailed by rejection must be considered serious. But even if his script is accepted, the writer may end by feeling that he has wasted his time, since the scale of payment which obtains at present is very far from exuberant. If the B.B.C. wants writers in general to become more radio-conscious—and it would be madness not to desire this—the anomalous practice of paying fantastic sums to "star" broadcasters, and even to people "of consequence" who know nothing of the medium, while fobbing off everyone else with the absolute minimum they can be bullied or cajoled into taking, must give way to a fairer and more enlightened system based on the quality of the script and the amount of trouble it is likely to have caused its author. In the last six years the B.B.C., abused on the one hand for extravagance, on the other for dullness, has adopted a policy of payment indefensibly glum, minatory and take-it-or-leave-it, which is destructive of goodwill and most embarrassing to those whose business it is to commission scripts. Like everything else worth having, good broadcasting *must* be expensive.

I hope the repeat of Louis MacNeice's *The Dark Tower* may have caused some of those who failed to enjoy this piece at a first hearing, to change their opinion. Though the recording could not, of course, repair the faults of the original production, I must reaffirm my conviction that this is one of the most poetic, imaginative and indeed profound radio plays ever devised. The present age seems likely to restore the allegory to its former position as an art form, and the microphone is ideally suited to reanimate it.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, March 31st.* The Cuckoo (1.25 p.m.); Concert (2.30 p.m.).
Monday, April 1st. Poets and Poetry (Geoffrey Grigson, 6.20 p.m.); Salute to all Fools (9.15 p.m.).
Tuesday, April 2nd. Night Sky in April (11.3 p.m.).
Wednesday, April 3rd. Concert (7 p.m.).
Thursday, April 4th. Belgian Piano Quartet (7.15 p.m.); How to Move House (Stephen Potter and Joyce Grenfell, 8 p.m.); The Three Musketeers (L.P. 8 p.m.).
Friday, April 5th. The Grand National (3 p.m.).
Saturday, April 6th. B.B.C. Theatre Orchestra (L.P. 7.45 p.m.). EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"The Bells of St. Mary's," at the Carlton
"Military Secret," and "Mongolia," at the Tatler
"We of the West Riding," at the Rialto

The bells of Hell go ting-a-ling-a-ling
For you, but *not* for me. . . .

So, too, the bells of St. Mary's. But they distinctly go peep-bo. There's the new Father with his boater, looking like seaside talent—how he strolls, how he knocks 'em down with a smile! Every now and then he will step in with a little homily in song—something unexpected about blue skies and you—and then all doubts are banished. Sweetness and light, sweetness and light! Who wouldn't, if he had his schooldays over again, go to St. Mary's? The most one'd get for cracking a ball through the neighbour's glass would be a "reprimand" from Father Crosby—meaning probably a song and a half-holiday; and trust him to wangle any exams. at the end of term. A fellow has to box, of course, and Sister Ingrid's the one to put him through his paces there: she didn't we are told, give up *nothing* when she took the veil. She does most of the praying, too. When it comes to getting a new school building out of Big Business across the way, she prays, the nuns pray, we all pray. The poor mutt can't hear himself work in his office for the sound of praying. He has a breakdown and goes about babbling that there's holly in his heart. Then they all sing about the bells of St. Mary's, Father Crosby weighs in with an *obbligato*, and you expect Father Hope to come dashing up, dressed probably as the new nun—oh no, they've kept him out of this film. It ends trickily in tears.

Well, there we are: the sweets of Sierra's *Cradle Song* churned into *fondants*, and clever as paint from beginning to end. The vulgarity goes without question, but when has the Church of Rome ever objected to vulgarity? Only the deeply irreligious, it would appear, are shocked.

The thriller at the Tatler lags rather in excitement and polish, but like nearly all Russian films, redeems itself with authentic touches. The mild elderly woman who feels faint in trains and sends an occasional family telegram, starts a fresh line of thinking about spies; and there are vivid details of life in the front line where a visiting Russian scientist has been ingeniously abducted by the Gestapo. For a revelation, however, of Soviet methods I shall continue to read the newspapers.

Mongolia, in the same programme, shows the changes brought by Communism to a nomadic race. These changes are described as a process of centuries telescoped into decades; freed from tyranny, the people who have once tended cattle now climb into tanks and bombers. What an advance! Some fascinating glimpses of woolly herds, sands, temples and dance masks. *We of the West Riding*, with its regional stresses, is as English as *Mongolia*, with its Empire-building, is Russian. It takes in moors and mills, cycling, *Jane Eyre*, the Huddersfield Choir, and life in a family of textile workers: an agreeable if rather over-polite specimen of English documentary.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to T. P. Baty.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Capt. E. C. Pinckney, Chairman of the Bradford-on-Avon magistrates, yesterday told a man who three times protested that he knew he would never get justice in the court and wanted to be tried by a jury: "There is such a thing as contempt of Court. So if you do not want to go to gaol straight away keep your head shut. I have never heard such blasted rubbish in all my life."—*New Chronicle.*

The President stated that the General Purposes Committee had, in view of the general food shortage, reviewed the situation as affecting the holding of the proposed annual dinner at the Connaught Rooms on March 26. It was felt that, in view of all the circumstances, the dinner should take place, but that dinner dress should be worn in place of evening dress.—*Timber Trades Federation.*

Theme is of an English spinster who inherits seven Paris houses of assignation. The Censor has now passed it for production at the Granville Theatre, Walham Green, on one condition: every time a character refers to the seven houses, he must call them clubs.—*Evening Standard.*

Lessons in make-up are given to girls leaving the A.T.S. in the Salisbury Plain district.—*News Chronicle.*

Correspondence

FAMINE AND HUMANITY

SIR,—Many of your readers will have been convinced by the argument in your article "Famine and Humanity" that in the interests of Europe we should draw on our large reserve stocks of food even if it should entail "a certain risk." May I suggest that *not* to draw on them entails far more serious risks? You rightly hint at the evil "political results" of famine; but you are also right in placing first "the simple fact that it is intolerable to eat decent meals while other people, whoever they are, die of starvation."

I have been reading the full report (in a local paper) of Field-Marshal Montgomery's recent speech at Hastings. *The Times* and other papers picked out a few sentences—those in a style to which we are indeed accustomed—but not hitherto from Lord Montgomery. The beginning of the Field-Marshal's account of the German situation was, however, omitted. It is important. On taking command of the British Zone, one of the first things he had done was to tell the 20 million German people, by Proclamation, "that getting their country right again was really a matter for them, but the British Forces would help them and give them food, housing, and freedom from disease." Lord Montgomery said how much concern he had felt that if a serious epidemic started it would spread to this country and we might not be "in a sufficiently good state after the war to stand up to it." Then followed the point that he had recently had to reduce the German ration to 1,000 calories per head, compared with our 2,800. "We will keep them at 1,000, I think . . . the Germans gave the inmates of Belsen 800."

He did not, of course, explain that even 1,500 calories (as all the experts agree) is too low to maintain working power and resistance to disease. (2,000 is required for that.) British rations, moreover, are supplemented by non-rationed foods which in German cities are usually unobtainable—as are also the potatoes which on paper are included in the 1,000 calories ration. So the Field-Marshal's promise is not, after all, to be honoured? Famine and serious epidemics are now, it seems, inevitable. The Field-Marshal hastened to add that "we are looking after the children, of course," although "the big overgrown Germans had to tighten their belts." As he also, however, mentioned the fact that "the infant mortality rate was five times the rate of this country" (this also was omitted from *The Times* report), it appears that the children make a rather poor start in life. It is obvious that under the reduced rations still more babies must perish. And how can we, in any case, look after the children of millions of city dwellers when the fathers (who are expected "to put their country right") will be too weak to earn a day's wages and the mothers too weak even to keep their houses clean?

British people are, in fact, to shoulder the responsibility for exposing parents and children together to the torture of famine and disease, and to the mental agony of watching each other suffer and die. Lord Montgomery went so far as to say that the assistance of organisations here (which wanted permission to send food parcels) "was not needed." "If you have any food to spare in this country, it is wanted here." In any case, he said, such assistance would not be worth while as the quantity would not go far among 23 million people. (In other words—if you see a whole shipload of people sinking it is not worth while just to save the few individuals who may be within reach!) One point at least in the Field-Marshal's account must cause us keen anxiety, but certainly no surprise: "Throughout the British Zone there was growing hostility to the Occupying Power."

It is sad—indeed, tragic—that the Field-Marshal, in spite of the oft-repeated, humane example of his own soldiers, seems to have yielded the day to Sir Ben Smith, or other Ministers concerned, with whom he had just been conferring. These leaders of ours appear to rate very low the decency of their countrymen. Some of us do not share their nervous scepticism. We believe that if the truth were fairly put, instead of being served up in a réchauffé of wartime propaganda, the majority of British people would shrink from imposing torture and death upon thou-

sands of women and children. Many would also see the importance that, in the eyes of Germans, the rule of our Democracy should compare favourably with that of Germany under the Nazis.

Dr. Summerskill has told us that if even half a slice of bread were saved daily per head it would "go a long way to save the lives of millions." If that is the case, it is a crime of the first magnitude that this negligible sacrifice should not be imposed upon us by an immediate act of the Government. In a number of countries the lives of millions are at stake. In the British Zones of Germany and of Austria our responsibility is direct. Promises of food have been made by the Field-Marshal in Germany; and also, of course, by Mr. Churchill (for Allied and enemy countries alike)—before our enemies surrendered. Is it to be recorded of us in history that in face of this terrible emergency we were ready to sacrifice the good name of England rather than to forgo a few crumbs of our bread?

DOROTHY F. BUXTON
Whingate, Peaslake (Mrs. C. RODEN BUXTON)

COMMUNISM AND DEMOCRACY

SIR,—Mr. Robert Boothby's letter in your current number encourages me to comment upon Professor Cole's recent article on "Socialism and Germany." The policy which was there put forward seemed to rest on two, more or less implied, assumptions.

After pointing out some of the differences between "Socialism of the West" and "Communism of the East" (and not mentioning, incidentally, that the former exists only in theory), Mr. Cole proceeded rather hastily to the conclusion that we (as Socialists) must oppose actively the spread of Communist influence in Western Europe. He thus neglected altogether the possibility that some common programme of action could be reached by Communists and Social Democrats.

Such neglect on his part might, of course, be justified if his other implied assumption were true. This assumption was that the establishment of Socialism is assured in Europe, and it remains only to settle the political leadership under which it is to be accomplished. The dangers of such an assumption should be clear to all Socialists at this time, when capitalism is still very strong in most European countries, and is still the basis of German economy. Mr. Boothby's thesis, that "the underlying struggle in Europe to-day is no longer between Socialism and Capitalism, but between Social Democracy and Communism" should also be seen in this light, and his approval of Mr. Cole's ideas about Germany will perhaps recall to some the Conservative applause for Mr. Bevin's foreign policy.

However, if Mr. Cole believes that capitalism has been defeated, why does he talk of "a reconstructed Western Europe under predominantly Socialist influence" and of "building up in Germany a powerful Social Democratic Party . . . working out [with others] a common economic and cultural programme for the entire Western Region," instead of referring to a Socialist Europe and the building of a Socialist Germany? If Social Democracy is to make a more constructive appeal to the Germans, or to any other Europeans, it will have to show in the countries where it is in power, or where it holds a temporarily decisive position politically (as in France), that it is more concerned with building a Socialist economy than with opposing the influence of Western, Eastern and "bastard and insincere perversions of" Communism. Mr. Cole is well on the way to a fatal confusion of nations with political doctrines: it is a relatively short step from talk of "the world-contesting forces of Soviet Communism and American capitalism" to the idea that capitalism exists only in America, and that all Communism is Russian, and thence to the conclusion that we in this country are already living under Socialism.

J. S. D. BACON
47 Hinton Avenue, Cambridge

SIR,—Mr. Robert Boothby writes in your issue of March 23rd, "The underlying struggle in Europe to-day is no longer between Socialism and Capitalism but between Social Democracy and Communism."

In this sentence he comes near to endorsing the thesis of the Communists, viz., that Social Democracy is the last instrument to be used by Capitalism before going over to Fascism. It also comes near to the view of the Führerbriefe of the Federation of German Industry circulated immediately before the advent of Hitler to power.

According to this view, "The last or 'outermost bearer' of bourgeois rule was . . . Social Democracy." The Social Democrats paralysed the revolutionary activities of the working classes and "chained them fast to the bourgeois state," functioning as a "sort of sluice-mechanism" preserving the standards of the organised working classes. "The political frontier between Social Democracy and Communism runs almost exactly along the social and economic line of this sluice-dam."

One wonders whether Mr. Boothby now sees, as do many more, that the Labour Government is useful to the economic system just in so far as it successfully rough-handles Communists? If it ever fails to stem the Communist tide, its usefulness will have gone.

H. V. W. LEWIS
Trevenna, Woodland Drive, Rogerstone, Mon

SIR,—Professor Cole proposes we should "build up a powerful Social Democratic party" in the British Zone in Germany, as a counter to Soviet policy in the east—the latter being provocatively identified with the resurgence of German nationalism, this "national Communism" being held to bear a "dangerous resemblance to the National Socialism of the years before 1933" (a curious result of Soviet policy!).

Without entering on all the questions raised by Mr. Cole, it is worth pointing out that he more or less ignores the greatest and besetting problem, that of the extirpation of Nazism and its social roots. The urgent question in Germany is not a choice between Socialist and Communist parties, but the search for the means of destroying German militaristic imperialism and the possibility of its resurgence. The strength of Soviet policy does not spring from its unrestricted support of the Communist party; it springs from Soviet insistence on the necessity of unity among the various anti-Nazi groups; and the Communists owe their power in the Eastern Zone to the fact that they have understood the need for unity, on the basis of which a policy of reform has been undertaken.

Unless we, in our Zone, can bring about the unity of the anti-Nazi parties, we shall not get nearer a solution of the German problem; we shall promote a lasting crisis. Social Democracy in Western Germany is stultified not merely because of British discouragement, but because of its own confusion and powerlessness, of its refusal to take the lead of a united German anti-Nazi movement. We encourage it to remain in opposition to the Communists—in spite of the fatality of this policy and tradition, as we have seen it in 1918 and in 1930–33—and then find that, because of this disunity Nazism is still strong and our military control must be maintained.

If only the Communists appreciate the need for unity, then the character of the unified movement will be primarily determined by them; if the Social Democrats would accept their responsibilities in this matter, they would have a corresponding share in the determination of the social structure and ideology of the new Germany.

In accepting the terms of the argument as defined by Mr. Cole, I realise that it is abstract and mystifying. It is necessary, if real clarity is to be obtained, to cut through the wrappers of words like "western" and "eastern," "anti-Nazi" and "unity," and to examine precisely what political, economic, social and cultural steps are necessary to found a more stable and democratic Germany. What is needed is, indeed, not an anxious balancing of the two Socialist parties, but the definition of a

R. F. Harrod

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JONATHAN CAPE

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SIR,—Mr. Robert Boothby is surely forgetful of history when he writes that "Failure to form a Western *bloc* was the main cause of the outbreak of the second world war, and of the near-defeat of the Western democracies."

It was precisely the fact that Britain and France sought to create a Western *bloc*, excluding and in opposition to the Soviet Union, which was the cause of the two misfortunes which he mentions. It was the abandonment by Britain of that suicidal policy, in 1941, which saved her from the consequences of her earlier folly.

Yet Mr. Boothby proposes that we should revert to our Municheers' policy, amended only that just Western Germany and the Ruhr, not the whole of Germany, shall be "ganged up" with us—against "Communism," he writes quite frankly! Nazi doctrine is remarkably tenacious of life.

EDGAR P. YOUNG,
28 Gloucester Place, W.1 Commander, R.N.

MR. BEVIN'S POLICY

SIR,—"Critic's" anxiety on the subject of Mr. Bevin would be amusing were the situation not so desperately serious. He seems quite unable to come to a decision on the matter—publicly at any rate. Possibly he does not perceive that Mr. Bevin's attitude in foreign affairs is pretty consistent. "Critic" points out in his paragraph that Mr. Bevin's behaviour is characterised by a fanatical hatred of everything connected with Communism and at the same time by a supine acceptance of traditional Foreign Office views. This is highly significant. It is precisely this curiously unsocialist attitude which has endeared so many leaders of the Labour Party to the Foreign Office and the Tories. There is nothing new in it—nor is it due in the least to "the inexcusable methods of Soviet Foreign Policy."

Mr. Bevin was displaying exactly the same tendencies in 1936. He hated the Communists and he supported Baldwin's policy of non-intervention in Spain. It will be recalled that he was instrumental in securing the Labour Party's acceptance of that policy at the Conference that year. It is true that many excuses were made for it—that a good deal of lip service was paid to the Republican Government and so on—but that hardly alters the facts. It should be noted that the very man who was too timorous to support the democratic Government of Spain in 1936 is now too timorous to do anything about Franco. Mr. Bevin's reputation for good old Palmerstonian plain speaking and action seems to depend entirely on the tub-thumping methods he uses against Socialist Russia.

Naturally Mr. Bevin has no patience with the Socialist critics in his own Party. Neither had Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. That gentleman described "Critic's" predecessors in 1931 as "oozy-easy asses." "Critic" may depend on it that if Mr. Bevin hasn't yet used that phraseology he will do so in the near future. It is to be hoped that the result will be somewhat different: that Mr. Bevin's contemptuous attitude to his critics, coupled with the outspoken offer of support for his policy from the Tory benches, will provoke something a little more effective in the way of action than was the case fifteen years ago.

Let us have no more cant about trusting our leaders. That trust has been abused and betrayed too often in the last twenty years for it to be any longer implicit. It is the business of every Labour M.P. and every Labour voter to see that the Socialist Ministers keep to a Socialist policy. Many of them won't like it—Mr. Bevin won't like it—but they must be made to do it—or thrown out. LEONARD PECK

COMMUNIST AFFILIATION

SIR,—While the Labour Party has ample justification for rejecting the Communist Party's request for affiliation, I think the wiser course would be to grant it.

My experience, while I edited the *Daily Herald*, was that it paid better to have able and energetic Communists on my staff than to let them intrigue against the paper and the Labour Party from outside.

Ramsay MacDonald, when Prime Minister, frequently urged me to get rid of these most useful colleagues; William Mellor was one, another is still working for the paper, and doing valuable work. I told the P.M. that I could take care they did not introduce Communist ideas or tactics into the *D.H.*, and that I would not consider parting with them.

I don't know whether I converted them or whether the flow of time altered the course of their minds, but they became convinced Labourites.

I feel sure that, once those who still call themselves Communists (a harmless and, to-day, a meaningless fancy) were inside the Labour fold, the intelligent and vigorous among them would do our Cause good service, while the others would sink into the insignificance from which their present eccentricity alone saves them.

To treat British Communism as a dangerous enemy, yearning to establish a totalitarian tyranny, seems to me an unrealistic, even a ludicrous error. Mr. Pollitt is no Stalin. He is, to borrow Disraeli's phrase about Bismarck, not even "painted to look like iron," much less steel. HAMILTON FYFE

LUNCH HOUR CONCERTS

SIR,—All music lovers will join with "Critic" in deploring the end of the National Gallery Concerts. Might I suggest that the principle of lunch-time recitals would be well preserved by the revival of the very successful series held at the Royal Exchange in the City during 1942 and 1943? Their suspension after the opening of the 1944 season was caused solely by the flying bomb attacks and was certainly not due to any lessening of the considerable public interest which arose; indeed, this Society was originally formed by members of the audience who desired the concerts to be a nucleus of continuing musical activity in the City. Not only did the Royal Exchange prove an excellent concert hall, but space was available for a very admirable canteen and there were several interesting exhibitions of painting, the whole providing a cultural centre of great value, which with the return of City workers from the Services should now attract even wider support. A. HARRISON ELT,
City Music Society, Hon. Secretary
4 Branch Hill, Hampstead, N.W.3

MALAYAN UNION

SIR,—I trust that, in the interests of accuracy, you will print these remarks following on your editorial comment "Malayan Union Postponed" in this week's issue. Actually the plan for Malayan Union has not been postponed. The constitutional proposals are all going through and a Malayan Union, bringing together the ten separate administrations, is to be established. What has been postponed are the proposals to create a common citizenship for all the races in Malaya, though even here the Government has emphatically stated that they will not depart from the principle—it is only the details which are to be reconsidered in consultation with all local interests.

RITA HINDEN

LORD ACTON'S ECONOMICS

SIR,—Surely it is rather absurd to say of Lord Acton that he disregarded "the economic motive," when he wrote the following passage on Parliaments: "The men who pay wages ought not to be the political masters of those who earn them, for laws should be adapted to those who have the heaviest stake in the country, for whom mis-government means not mortified pride or stinted luxury, but want and pain and degradation, and risk to their own lives and to their children's souls." Introduction to *History of Freedom* (p. 29). Lord Acton considered that the poor had the heaviest stake in the country and needed good government the most. C. H. NORMAN

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METHUEN

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY
104 Pages. April-June, 1946
Edited by LEONARD WOOLF
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

For forty years Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* has been the master-light of all our seeing, both as common readers and as professional critics. There are those, of course, who greet the name with a superior smile, and the learned Professor Stoll has conducted the case for the prosecution with an insistence which sometimes darkens counsel. But however much we go about it and about, Bradley is the rock upon which orthodoxy is founded. Detractors complain that Bradley's Prince of Denmark, *totus, teres atque rotundus*, is too good to be true, and that no distinction is made between dramatic improvisation and the psychology of real life (whatever real life may be). Dr. Granville Barker (who has kept us waiting so long for the Fourth Series of his Shakespeare *Prefaces*), although loyal to his master, repeats the accusation gently in a footnote. It is true that Bradley does not distinguish between character as revealed in dialogue and action upon the stage and character as analysed by the commentary of the nineteenth-century novelist. But even Dr. Granville Barker is not innocent in this respect. When we close his *Hamlet* or his *Othello* we cannot but feel that his exposition of character is conceived and stated in the terms of the novel from, say, *Middlemarch* to *Howard's End*. His psychology is already touched by time. The psychology of Proust, Joyce, Huxley, Lawrence and Virginia Woolf—not to mention the talent of the Nineteen Thirties—does not function in the context of the world of Henry James. After perusal of Dr. Granville Barker as of Bradley, it is refreshing and corrective to turn back to Samuel Johnson, who wrote of the characterisation in *Othello* before Tolstoy—to give the greatest name as a collective symbol of the creator whose medium is narrative not dramatic—was born.

> The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proof of Shakespeare's skill in human nature as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer.

And what more need be said of Emilia than this:

> Her virtue is such as we often find, worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villainies.

It is rather disappointing that Dr. Granville Barker devotes a whole volume to his *Othello* Preface (Sidgwick and Jackson, 15s.). In *Hamlet* his full-length treatment was inevitable, even if Dr. Dover Wilson had not been complicating the issue with his characteristic enthusiasm, ingenuity, vigour and persuasiveness. In the present *Preface*, which is exhaustive and a little exhausting, our great man of the theatre drives relentlessly through the tragedy, scene by scene, line by line, word by word. The experience is that of examining every square inch of a picture through a magnifying glass. At the end we ask to be allowed to stand back and see it. Or, to put the matter with ungrateful crudity, Dr. Granville Barker rubs our noses in the play. In a sense the play justifies such treatment because Shakespeare also rubs our noses in it. As Bridges put it, this tragedy induces a feeling of extreme exasperation. How different is our response to *Lear, Hamlet* and *Macbeth!* Many readers, in consequence, find the play intolerable. That Dr. Granville Barker is aware of this—and is there anything in Shakespeare of which he is not aware?—is revealed by the fact that in addition to free quotation in the text itself, as often as not he finds it necessary to print a whole scene at the foot of the page so that quotations are duplicated. And after some hundred and fifty pages of analysis of the action in which nothing in the characterisation is allowed to elude us, he follows with fifty pages more in which the characters are expounded yet again. Iteration, as he notes, is a frequent device in the play.

Shakespeare wrote for the stage, and Dr. Granville Barker has shown us, as no other critic could have done, and as few have attempted to do, all that that truism involves. But Shakespeare will always be read and read again as the creator of types and individuals who are immortal, and as the man who before and beyond all novelists holds a mirror up to human nature. Johnson and Hazlitt read him thus, no less than Bradley. In what terms, then, on what principles, did Shakespeare interpret humanity? Can we ever hope to recapture his psychology? Iago is a creation very much to the point, for Iago is as his first victim says, "an inhuman dog." There have been many variations on "the monster of motiveless malignity." The analysis of Iago is one of the high spots in Hazlitt's criticism, and Lytton Strachey's version in the essay left unfinished at his death is subtle and attractive. But we shall do well to do what no critic, I believe, has yet done, namely, to turn back to Shakespeare's own contemporaries and to Shakespeare himself. For these men characterisation spelt personification; whether of vices and virtues in the mediæval tradition, or of Jonsonian humours, or of the passions. Even a casual reading in the Books of Characters which were so popular in the early Jacobean period, derived from Theophrastus and exploited by Earle, Overbury, Hall and others, is illuminating. Here we meet the Envious Man, the Malcontent, and above all the Dissembler; and as we read we recognise again and again the nature, spirit and the technique of Iago. Bacon's Essays on Envy and on Dissimulation also provide relevant material. A quotation from Nash's Pierce Pennilesse, 1592, gives the Elizabethan conception of envy.

> Mark you this sly mate, how smoothly he looks? The poets were ill-advised, that fained him to be a lean gap-toothed Beldam, with hollow eye, pale cheeks and snaky hair: for he is not only a man but a jolly lusty old Gentleman, that will wink and laugh and jest drily, as if he were the honestest of a thousand.

And again:

> Envy is a crocodile that weeps when he kills, and fights with none but he feeds on. This is the nature of this quick-sighted monster; he will endure any pains to endamage another, waste his body with undertaking exploits that would require ten men's strengths, rather than any should get a penny but himself, blear his eyes to stand in his neighbour's light; and to conclude, like Atlas underprop heaven alone, rather than any should be in heaven he liked not of, or come unto heaven by any other means but him.

Is this not an Iago in the grand manner? And the conception is all of a piece with perspicacious sentences to be found in Bacon and the Character Writers and in the Ironical Man of Theophrastus.

Nor is Iago unique in Shakespeare's own work, as is commonly supposed. We catch a glimpse of him when Cornwall rates the disguised Kent for belabouring the wretched Oswald.

> This is some fellow,
> Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
> A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
> Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,
> An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth:
> And they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
> These kinds of knaves I know, which in this plainness
> Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
> Than twenty silly ducking observants,
> That stretch their duties nicely.

But Iago's ancestor is to be found in Shakespeare more than ten years earlier, in his "graver labour," *The Rape of Lucrece*. He is perjured Sinon,

> whose enchanting story
> The credulous old Priam after slew,
> Whose words like wildfire burnt the shining glory
> Of rich-built Ilion. . . .

The painter of the Fall of Troy has laboured with his skill to hide deceit under "a harmless show" of humble gait and calm looks:

> But like a constant and confirmed devil,
> He entertained a show so seeming just,
> And therein so ensconced his secret evil,
> That jealousy itself could not mistrust
> False-creeping craft and perjury should thrust
> Into so bright a day such black-faced storms
> Or blot with hell-born sin such saint-like forms.

The key word is "seeming." "Men should be what they seem." "Out on thee! Seeming! I will write against it." This it is which links Sinon, Tarquin, Gertrude, Angelo, Cressida, Cawdor and Iago.

> There's no art
> To find the mind's construction in the face:
> He was a gentleman on whom I built
> An absolute trust.

Shakespeare is much concerned with the difference between "the exterior and the inward man."

> My tables! Meet it is I set it down,
> That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.

The plot of *Othello* is as simple as it is strong. Iago is a white man with a black heart. Othello is a blackamoor who, like Gunga Din, for all his dirty hide is white, pure white, inside. And Desdemona?

> She that so young could give out such a seeming.

Is she weed or flower?

> Her name, that was as fresh
> As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
> As mine own face.

She is white proved to be black and then, in one of the most intense of Aristotelian recognitions, revealed as white. It is the age-old question of philosophers; which is the appearance, which is the reality?

> This is and is not Cressid.
>
> I think my wife be honest and think she is not;
> I think that thou are just and think thou art not.
> I'll have some proof.

Philosophers are searching for proof still.

Dr. Granville Barker's Iago is a sophistication of Hazlitt's phrase "an amateur of tragedy in real life who casts the principal parts among his nearest friends and connections and rehearses his plot in downright earnest." Iago works in the medium of the actor and has the actor's chameleon-like ability, the parasitic faculty of being all things to all men. This leads Dr. Granville Barker to a brilliant and expert exposition of all that the art of acting entails; the sensitive ear, the receptive eye, the dancer's body, the emotional response, and above all, the capacity to reproduce the effect of understanding another's thought without necessarily having understood it in the least. "In the character and skill of an Iago is pictured to us . . . how bedded in human nature and active in real life the actor's faculty can be." Iago emerges as in part the *histrio* or *cabotin*.

Most valuable is the critic's disposal of the old controversy about "double time" in *Othello*, which he more happily calls "the Ambiguity in Time." Such ambiguity is usual in Shakespeare, but this play supplies an extreme illustration of the practice which sprang from the panoramic or cinematographic drama demanded by the bare Elizabethan stage. "The play's essential action, concludes our producer, lies in the processes of thought and feeling by which the characters are moved and the story is forwarded. And the deeper the springs of these the less do time, place, and circumstance affect them."

Dr. Granville Barker stands in our time as Johnson, Hazlitt and Bradley stood in theirs. And he is their peer. His new *Preface* has not quite the spontaneity and variety of the first two volumes, and it is to be hoped that he may revert to his original method of writing prefaces in a stricter sense of that word. In particular *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus*, *As You Like It* and *The Winter's Tale* cry out for the exercise of his remarkable powers. If he will not produce Shakespeare for us, his *Prefaces* are the next best thing. There is no longer any excuse with his present volume before us for the professional actor to misinterpret Iago as a Victorian villain. Has it ever been truly played since Charles Lamb saw Bensley?

GEORGE RYLANDS

ON MUSIC

Gabriel Fauré. By CHARLES KOECHLIN. Translated by LESLIE ORREY. *Dennis Dobson.* 7s. 6d.

About Conducting. By SIR HENRY WOOD. *Sylvan Press.* 8s. 6d.

Essays and Lectures. By H. C. COLLES. *Oxford University Press.* 12s. 6d.

Maine on Music. By BASIL MAINE. *John Westhouse.* 8s. 6d.

Rimsky-Korsakov. By GERALD ABRAHAM. *Duckworth.* 5s.

Ordeal by Music. By R. NETTEL. *Oxford University Press.* 12. 6d.

The treatment of Fauré in *Grove's Dictionary* typifies his neglect in this country: even in the third edition (1927) he gets only one-and-a-half columns, which is almost precisely the space allotted to Jean-Baptiste Faure, the baritone and composer of such sentimental religious ballads as *Les Rameaux* and *Le Crucifix*; and the supplementary volume of 1940 does little to mend matters. It is good news, therefore, that a study of Fauré is shortly to be added to the valuable "Master Musicians" series published by Messrs. Dent, for frankly the volume under review cannot be regarded as much more than a stop-gap. M. Charles Koechlin, who was born in 1867, is a minor composer and one of Fauré's devoted pupils; his book appeared in 1927 (that is to say, only three years after the death of its subject), and no attempt has been made to bring it up to date. In more than one respect it suffers from over-proximity to its subject-matter; the author's attitude is too uncritical, too full of "*cher maître*" sentiment, and too much concerned with French musical politics to be of much value to the English reader. There are happy touches, as when Fauré's modulations are said to possess the "perfect grace of a cat falling on its feet"; but there are also lapses into gush, as in the following passage about the slow movement of the *Second Piano Quartet*:

> . . we are transported far from reality, into a fairy-land—beyond the limits of the conscious. Sadness or happiness? Is it indeed of this world? One cannot tell. We need not seek to know, nor are mere words of avail . . .

In that case why use them? But it is only fair to M. Koechlin to add that his book has been wretchedly translated and carelessly put together. Indeed, the translator (whose name appears as Orry on page iv and Orrey on page viii) provides us with a few stimulating puzzles. The reader who is well up in French local adjectives will doubtless grasp what is meant by "Bitterois amateurs" performing in the "Bitteroise Arena"; but if he is further able to decipher "the sympathetic Bitterois Mycena," then he cannot belong to what M. Koechlin calls the *vulgum pecus*, and will hardly require a translation at all!

Sir Henry Wood's stray thoughts on conducting are here gathered into another very untidily produced volume, but one well worth reading for the originality and idiosyncrasies of its matter. It is well known that Sir Henry regarded organisation and precise attention to detail as more than half the battle for the orchestral conductor; nevertheless, the student who opens this volume on the look-out for some tips on the interpretation of Beethoven may well be surprised at what turns up:

> I make a point of wearing woollen undergarments always, never mind the temperature . . . My suits for rehearsal are kept entirely for that purpose, and are of pure woollen material . . . I find at least three rehearsal suits essential. This is an economy too, for if they are made of the same material repairs are easily effected. I have all garments numbered on each piece, Suit No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on.

Wonderful Sir Henry! He tells us everything, and we learn, not only about the three rehearsal suits, but of the "tight abdominal belt" which he found so valuable as a stimulus to correct breathing, and hence as a source of vitality; in fact, he is inclined to relate the present decline of singing, and "the shocking wobble and tremolo" of so many contemporary singers to the decline of the corset. There is not a dull or useless page in his book, but there are a great many repetitive ones.

Few music critics can hope to make a satisfactory book out of their daily or weekly articles. True, we still read Corno di Bassetto with undiminished pleasure (and considerable respect); but Shaw is Shaw, and then look at the space the lucky fellow enjoyed! Neither Dr. Colles in *The Times* nor Mr. Basil Maine in (was it?) *The Morning Post* had room, even in the old days, to make very much more than a single point per article. Both men made their point with liveliness; and Dr. Colles also with urbanity and considerable scholarship. Two or three sets of lectures (of which the best are the three on "Musical London from the Restoration to Handel") give substance to this posthumous volume, but the bulk of it is made up of those Saturday essays which used to reveal his skill and charm as a musical *feuilletoniste;* the book is rounded off with a discreet but affectionate Memoir. Dr. Colles was at his best on Purcell and Vaughan Williams, but an essay on Elgar and Mahler reveals that latent strain of insularity which is the besetting sin of English criticism. "It would scarcely be possible," he wrote, "to produce a caricature of Mahler recognizable by those who know his work thoroughly. He never achieved a distinctly personal idiom." At this statement any good Continental musician would rub his eyes; for the truth is that Mahler is ridiculously easy to parody. Where Dr. Colles is urbane, Mr. Maine is provocative, and certainly it would be a dull world without both types of critic; all the same, I think it was hardly worth while to reprint so many brief essays on ephemeral topics and contributions to forgotten controversies, such as the Great Kreisler Hoax. And would it really be a good idea, as he thinks, to have Debussy's *Pelléas* performed by puppets?

Mr. Abraham's *Rimsky-Korsakov* is a brief biography uniform with his recent *Tchaikovsky*. Rimsky did not live an adventurous life, but his personality (with its odd blend of pantheism and pedantry) is an interesting one, and no Russian novelist invented a more extraordinary situation than the offer of a Professorship of Composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire to a twenty-seven-year-old naval officer and amateur composer. What was perhaps still more extraordinary was that he should have become such a very good teacher: in fact, he and Tchaikovsky alone saw the importance of technique and alike deplored the amateurish approach of the Nationalists, who (in Tchaikovsky's words) "have no self-confidence and no patience, and throw up the sponge at the slightest difficulty." Mr. Abraham makes the most of his facts, and includes a fuller and more accurate list of Rimsky's compositions than has hitherto appeared in this country.

Ordeal by Music is a very sad book. Mr. Nettel recounts the history of an English composer, now in his seventy-first year, whose work has been praised in glowing terms by Elgar, Wood, Tovey and Goossens; whose opera *The Tigers* was accepted by Fritz Busch for production at Dresden just before the Nazis swept that fine musician out of office; and yet whose very name—Havergal Brian—is scarcely known to the present-day concert-goer. He writes, it appears, in the Berlioz-Strauss-Mahler tradition of immense choral and orchestral forces with every conceivable trimming, such as "gong, thunder machine, tubular bells, chimes, chains and bird-scare"; change of fashion, together with the practical and financial difficulties presented by his enormous scores and uncompromising attitude, has quietly swept him into a corner, where, however, he continues doggedly to work. It is difficult to gather from Mr. Nettel any precise notion of the style and musical content of all these neglected compositions, but I confess to a lively desire to hear at least the *Gothic Symphony*, of which Mr. Eugene Goossens wrote that he considered it "in all sincerity an outstanding masterpiece." He planned to give it in Cincinnati under festival conditions in 1935, but at the last moment was restrained from doing so on the grounds of economy. He then passed on the score, with the most urgent recommendation, to Koussevitsky; since when—silence! And there, most unsatisfactorily, the matter rests.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

A RELEVANT WITNESS

Greece: The Whole Story. By FRANCIS NOEL-BAKER, M.P. *Hutchinson.* 3s. 6d.

Welcomed with courteous distaste at our Embassies abroad, the unofficial Parliamentary observers persist in their self-assumed duty of giving information to the reluctant Foreign Secretary, who prefers to obtain it through his "usual channels." These modern nuisances have revived a distinguished tradition. Did not Gladstone, after a winter in Italy, shock the conscience of Europe by his letters to Lord Aberdeen on the tyranny of the Naples Government? And move the nation to anger by his description of the manacled patriots, held without trial, in dungeons? And did not William Russell, correspondent of *The Times*, during the Crimean War, affront a peer and a Commander-in-Chief and shake a Prime Minister from office, by telling Britain of the hushed-up horror of Scutari and the failures before Sebastopol? The value of evidence on foreign affairs depends on the witness's ability to feel, as well as to observe.

Such a witness is Francis Noel-Baker in his restrained and valuable account of recent Greek history.

"One of the tragedies of the war," he writes, "has been the hardening of the heart of humanity; we have become so sated with atrocity and frightfulness that mere descriptions of human misery and degradation, however vivid, have lost their meaning."

Noel-Baker himself has not suffered this indignity. He has lived among Greek peasants and knows them, not as specimens for the study of a sentimental archæologist, but as hungry men and women. His description of the events, from the Italian attack to the brief joy of liberation is inwoven with sympathy for their struggle.

Though covered now with the spittle of obloquy E.A.M. was, as Noel-Baker points out, a great movement of national liberation, the Resistance which greeted our troops with garlands long before the collaborators and fence-sitters greeted the Staff with cocktails and complaints. The "usual channels" lay it against E.A.M.—and Mr. Bevin has echoed them in the House—that E.A.M. was more interested in taking power than in harassing the Germans. But can we blame E.A.M. that, having helped to expel the foreign Fascists, they should have forestalled the seizure of power by their domestic Fascists? Or object that, like the French Resistance Movement, they took possession of their capital city rather than chase the retreating Germans in order to bring them to a battle for which they themselves were unequipped? If the Greeks had had de Gaulle to compose their differences within a resistance programme, while treating with the Allies as an equal, they might, like the French, have been spared a civil war. Instead, they had George Glücksberg, client to Churchill. For our part, seeking Greek friendship, we won the king but lost the people. The Civil War, the break-up of E.A.M., the mutual ferocity of monarchists and republicans, the Right Wing victory safeguarded by British bayonets, the persecution of the Left and the reconstitution of E.A.M. with Communist leadership and Soviet sympathy, are stages in Greece's unhappy progress which Noel-Baker describes with moderation and without prejudice.

He does not deal with a paramount interest which Britain has in Greece—her strategic interest. "To-day," he writes, "the British are in Greece to see that democracy is re-established." That is true. An undemocratic Greece

Government would be hostile to British democracy. We require a friendly Government for our Mediterranean security. How can such a Government evolve in Greece? Since Metaxas, the only parties which have retained their vigour are the Populists or Monarchists and the Communists who worked underground. The Liberals have lost their following, and the Socialists are few and weak. We could have encouraged a strong Left Coalition after the Liberation without Communist predominance, if our support had not been for the monarchy. Now it is Russia who champions a powerful Communist Left while the Centre and Left Centre, barely constituted in political parties, had our backing until recently. But elections with E.A.M. and the Left Centre abstaining are likely to give the Populists a majority. Will such elections—the equivalent of elections in Britain without the Labour Party—bring stability to Greece, ensure our security and allow us to withdraw our forces? Noel-Baker, though his book, by a remarkable publisher's feat, brings the story up to the Bevin-Vyschinsky "rough-house" at U.N.O., does not venture a forecast. "Britain," he writes, "has been vindicated by the United Nations. But history will give the final verdict." It may be that in time Greece will thank both her would-be protectors—Britain and Russia—for their care, and invite them to be gone. Among the many lessons which Noel-Baker's short but useful book emphasises, is that the Greeks, while hospitable to their guests, are inclined to deal rudely with those who stay too long. He will do well to send a complimentary copy to both Mr. Bevin and Mr. Vyschinsky.

MAURICE EDELMAN

HENRI MICHAUX

Au Pays de la Magie. By HENRI MICHAUX. *Horizon.* 10s. 6d.

A bus at night turns a street corner, and as you peer out a universe of lamps wheels round, projected by the glass you are looking through: optical illusion, but for a second—no more—you have juggled with space. Or at the moment of going to sleep, you indulge an odd fancy, finding, say, by the bed on which you are stretched out, opening the window, flying away. You shy the hassock at the preacher. You vanish over the cliff and hang for eternity from the edge. You hew to pieces the man in front who has unconcernedly bought the last cigarette-packet in the shop . . . Transports, whether of anger, desire, dread or mere caprice, indulged with a forlorn pleasure, since they represent a life of the imagination to which we daren't, even if we should wish, abandon ourselves. Fancy, having flown off, is snapped back on strings of elastic. The universe hasn't reeled, the dreamer has never left his bed, the preacher concludes his phrase unruffled, the tragedy of cliff-edge or cigarette-shop is averted. Yet, while yielding to common sense, one may regret its inevitable rulings. We lack courage perhaps; for there are other, safer, paths of delirium: sex, alcohol, drugs. Have we even realised, in rejecting these adventures, the possibility of a choice? And aren't they in themselves—our irrational moments—disturbingly lucid and intense? It is left to the lunatic and the poet to explore the danger areas of the mind: areas, by the way, which each one of us has inhabited as a matter of course in childhood.

Henri Michaux is such a poet. He collects the incipient melodramas and paradoxes that would engulf us, tends them, breeds from them, introduces refinements, imposes (it would seem) a calm and order on derangement. His *Au Pays de la Magie* is the world we live in, but with all the laws repealed. Newton's apple (if it came into it) would remain suspended in mid-air or reattach itself to its branch. Miracles pop up everywhere.

It's not unusual—one of these little paragraphs begins—to see a wave coming along the road, a wave all on its own that has wandered off from the ocean. What is the point of that, you may ask? No point at all; but if it were vulgarised in a Disney cartoon you wouldn't even think to question it. Or the next paragraph recommends that when you meet someone walking along a river with a foot on each bank, you should on no account speak to him: he might be seriously put out, if you did. Or (to delve further into these fancies) a village will crumble to dust because of its domestic hatreds; one passes respectfully a dry man sitting in the rain; a particular tree takes to flapping its branches for a fortnight in spring; frogs and other emanations come out of the cupboard (a frog, we are told, being worth two wasps); the hunchback unloads from his hump a score or so of little hunchbacks; criminals are punished by having their faces peeled off; there's a fog—let us put on our fog-spectacles; and we are enjoined never to laugh before noon—it's a waste of energy and dangerous into the bargain . . .

These are the kind of illuminations, fireflies from the unconscious or semi-conscious mind, that M. Michaux conjures with. He achieves often a quite startling felicity. The condition of such writing is that it should be light, ruthless, fabulous, exquisitely patterned: all these epithets apply to *Au Pays de la Magie*. Let me give the insidious flavour of M. Michaux's prose by quoting one of his pieces entire:

> Une journée en soi existe et la précédente existe et celle qui précède la précédente, et celle d'avant . . . et elles sont bien agglutinées, des dizaines ensemble, des trentaines, des années entières, et on n'arrive pas à vivre, *soi*, mais seulement à vivre *la vie*, et l'on est tout étonné.
>
> L'homme du pays de la Magie sait bien cela. Il sait que la journée existe et très forte, très soudée, et qu'il doit faire ce *que la journée ne tient pas à faire*.
>
> Il cherche donc à sortir sa journée du mois. C'est l'attraper qui est difficile. Et ce n'est pas le matin qu'on y arriverait. Mais vers deux heures de l'après-midi, il commence à la faire bouger, vers deux heures, elle bascule, elle bascule; là il faut être tout à son affaire, peser, tenir, lâcher, décharger, convoyer par-dessus.
>
> Enfin, il la *détourne*, la *chevauche*. Il s'en rend maître. Et vite à l'important, vite, obligé qu'il sera—hélas!—à abandonner la journée à l'enclenchement des suivantes au plus tard vers minuit. Mais que faire? C'est là le tribut à l'existence animale.

Nonsense? So too are *The Phoenix and Turtle* and *Alice in Wonderland;* in gravity perhaps *Au Pays de la Magie* lies somewhere between.

One point about this little book remains, for me, more puzzling than its wild but precise divagations of fancy, and that is how far the author gives in to his visions. His is a poetry of isolation, preferring sensations to judgments, and bequeathing more life to raindrops and pebbles than to a greyhound or a fellow human being. At times his Magie, or poet-conjuror, seems to wander ambiguously from surrealism into cults of yoga, black magic, voodoo. I must confess to finding this element repugnant. (The mythical growth that reaches its final flowering in *Au Pays de la Magie* can be enjoyed at earlier stages in the selection from twenty years of writing, *L'Espace du Dedans*, published in 1944.) Also I can't quite follow Gide in his *Découvrons Henri Michaux*, which refers us to Baudelaire and Rimbaud and seems to place Michaux on the same high level. He is admittedly a rare discoverer, an illusionist of the first order. But a great poet? Surely not!

G. W. STONIER

Company Meeting

UNITED KINGDOM PROVIDENT INSTITUTION

FUNDS NEARLY £30,000,000

SIR ERNEST BENN'S STATEMENT

The annual general meeting of the United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution will be held at the head office, 33 Gracechurch Street, London, E.C., on June 10th.

The following is extracted from the statement by the chairman, SIR ERNEST J. P. BENN, Bt., circulated with the report and accounts.—The balance-sheet and life assurance account for the twelve months to December 31st, 1945, continue the story of uninterrupted progress now covering a period of six years. The inflation, which seems to be inevitable from war, coupled with official policies in forcing a policy of cheap money, has enhanced considerably the paper values of our investments and properties. Should these paper values prove to be permanent the position as an institution is even stronger than shown by the printed figures. On the other hand, inflation should subside, then, having taken no credit for any such fictitious improvement, the institution will be able to view without undue concern a possible return of values to more natural levels.

PROBLEMS OF CONTROL

The business of the institution, as, indeed, of the nation, is handicapped by the difficulties of control. It is not merely that controls are too numerous and too changeable, but the absence of any general understanding of the nature and purpose of control itself. The art of successful control lies in making people understand and appreciate their personal part in the general scheme. The aim should be to simplify.

FROZEN GILT-EDGED

In connection with the nationalisation of industries it is suggested that a new class of Government stock, to be less readily marketable should be issued to coal-owners and others by way of purchase consideration for properties acquired by the State. The inconvenience, even injustice, of such a proposal has been discussed, but attention should also be directed to the possibility of damage to the national credit and consequently to the State itself. In commodity markets it has been shown over and over again that the freezing, hoarding or holding back of stocks depresses the market price.

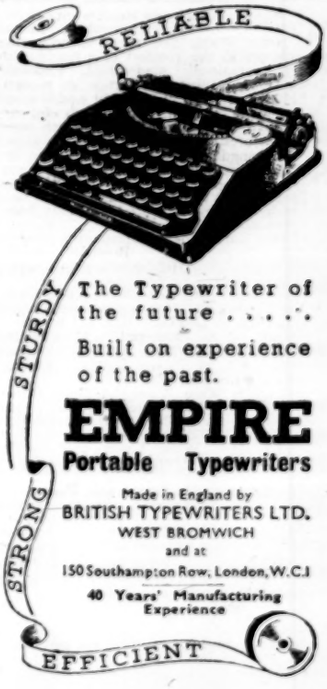
The experience of Governments in buying and withholding wheat, coffee and wool has been equally unfortunate. The theory that the price of existing Government stocks will be assisted by providing for large blocks of similar obligations to be kept off the market may, therefore, require further consideration.

NATIONALISATION AND INFLATION

Our leaders in commerce and industry have always considered the creation of reserves, adequate to meet every reasonable contingency, to be of the very first importance. If, however, as is now suggested, the State is to purchase on a basis of dividends distributed, there may be a change in this wise attitude; companies will be tempted to distribute more and to leave the future to take care of itself. Any such change must be inflationary in its nature and must weaken the confidence of the public. Conservative finance is the very basis of British credit.

INCREASED NEW BUSINESS

The new business completed for the year is the largest since 1940, showing an increase of £138,810 sum assured over 1944, and we have every reason to hope the present year will show a considerably larger increase. The quality of the business remains at the usual high standard.



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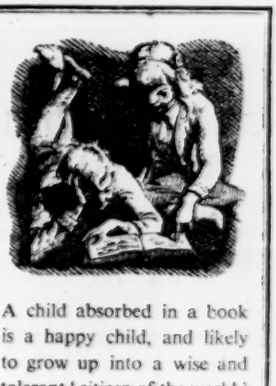
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THE BOMBING OF GERMANY

Enemy Coast Ahead. By Wing Commander Guy Gibson, V.C., D.S.O., D.F.C. *Michael Joseph.* 12s. 6d.

The chief impression that will be left by this book on the minds of its readers will be of the charm and single-minded devotion to duty of its author who was killed "on his last flight" after a record extraordinary even in the R.A.F.

Gibson's intention was to tell here not only the story of his own experience, in Bomber Command, and of the months when he was flying night fighters, but also the history of Bomber Command as he had seen it from its earliest days. In the first years, and especially in 1941 and 1942, after the big bombing raids on Germany began, our position was most disquieting.

The long-range bomber was then the only weapon we were likely to be able to use in Europe for several years, and the only weapon which, if properly used, might strangle Germany's war industry while we were building up our own—much of it out of range of the enemy in the Dominions and the United States.

But the losses in Bomber Command, from enemy night fighters, anti-aircraft and also from the weather, were absolutely appalling, and, moreover, very many of them were at that time being incurred in vain, as our bombers were continually not hitting the target. It should never be forgotten that the losses of airmen in Bomber Command alone were greater than in all the British Armies from D day to V.E. Day.

Wing Commander Gibson pays great tribute to the bulldog tenacity of Sir Arthur Harris, who inspired the young men of Bomber Command going out to their deaths, and who got for them every possible aid that could be conceived by our scientists. The scientists steadily cut down our losses, though here we are not told how they succeeded in baffling the enemy and overcoming the dangers of weather. And the scientists invented ways and means by which the navigators could pinpoint their targets, in spite of smoke screens and decoys.

Wing Commander Gibson says less, very possibly because he knew less, about a factor which played an equally important part—the choosing of the most effective targets. In this the contribution of the experts of the Ministry of Economic Warfare was, in my opinion, by far the most important, though this was not realised everywhere. Indeed the simple-minded tenacity of the Air Staff may have sometimes been a liability as well as an asset. The pinpoint bombing of a single bottleneck in the production of an absolutely essential item of war equipment could be far more effective in strangling the German Armies than the obliteration of a whole city. As it was, both policies were pursued, and both made a contribution to victory without which the victory on land could never have been won with so few losses and in such a short time. Many German experts have given their testimony that it was the plan behind our bombing of strangling German industry which defeated Germany.

The most interesting part of Gibson's book is the great tale of the planning and execution of the destruction of the Moehne Dam. First came the analysis of the problem and the invention of the weapon; secondly, the long period of training in secret to achieve the accuracy absolutely essential to its use; finally, the raid itself, magnificently led by Wing Commander Gibson, for which he was awarded the V.C.

David Garnett

THE UNREPENTANT LIBERAL

Victors Beware. By Salvador de Madariaga. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. de Madariaga writes on the principle that attack is the best form of defence. In the present century two world wars have already been fought between democracy and authoritarianism, and the struggle, which seems likely to destroy both, though its phases and faces have differed from generation to generation, may be recognised to have begun round about the year 1789. Formally democracy has won in 1945 as it did in 1918, but no "democrat" who remembers President Wilson and has seen and suffered Fascism and Nazism can feel very happy at the prospects of democracy in the world that they have bequeathed to us. As usual, the most dangerous enemies are those within the gates. The note of apology in the voices of those celebrating democracy's victory is ominous; so is the widespread habit of automatic lip-service to democratic "principle" combined with eager condonation or acceptance of authoritarianism "in practice." One of the most curious aspects of this defeatism in the hour of victory is the contempt for Liberalism and the eclipse of Liberals. Whatever else democracy may or may not be, it inevitably must embody some of the most fundamental principles and practices of Liberalism. Yet that is precisely what nine out of ten democrats are terrified to-day of acknowledging; in order to escape the taint of Liberal or bourgeois democracy, they are prepared to rechristen servitude liberty and see emblems of freedom in the police State and the concentration camp.

Not so Mr. de Madariaga. He is an unrepentant Liberal and he defends Liberalism by identifying it with democracy and by attacking authoritarianism under whatever form it reveals or conceals itself. That is the merit of his book—a book which, like the author's mind and method has serious failings. His thesis is simple that the free man is better than the slave and a community of free men than a community of sheep or cows, and that in the human herd or flock no governmental method of approaching this end has so far been discovered other than those of parliamentary democracy. In developing this thesis he carries the attack into the territory of the authoritarians, whether Fascist or Communist, and into that of his many weaker brethren who would gladly compromise with either. That, I repeat, is the great merit of his book; it should make every reader face the question where he or she stands in this terrible battle over the corpse of liberty.

Mr. de Madariaga adopts as the best definition of democracy M. de Brouckère's description of it as "government by public opinion," and he regards it therefore as fatuous to represent democracies systems in which only one political party is allowed or communities where no papers or books can be published except those which please the Government or where "justice" is under the thumb of the Government and . . . where therefore there is no guarantee that the private citizen who dissents from the Government may not be punished for his opinions . . . The relevance of this to the Soviet system is obvious and there is a great deal in the book which develops and defends this criticism explicitly in so far as it concerns Russia and her relations to the United States and Britain. Mr. de Madariaga holds that international peace cannot be founded upon national authoritarianism and maintains that the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. towards its neighbours, the tension which has immediately developed between it and its former major Allies, its obstructive and destructive strategy in UNO are the direct result of the internal structure of the Soviet system. He develops the same line of thought in his defence of the League and its Covenant as compared with UNO and its Charter.

Mr. de Madariaga tries to forestall the attacks of Communists and their fellow travellers

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VERY charming cottage outskirts Exeter, all conveniences, exchange periodically during 1946 accommodation Hampstead district; two adults. Box A4006.

YOUNG researcher at British Museum, just demobd., needs flat. Mod. Box A3961.

EX-SERVICE couple urgently need 3-4 rooms in Spring. Unfurnished flat, house, studio, 6 miles Inner Temple Up to £150 p.a Box A3962

Accommodation—continued

WANTED to purchase, 4-5 bedroom mod house, N.W. London. Modern 3-room, self-contained flat in exchange, same district. No agents. Write Box S.11, The National Publicity Co., Ltd., 43/44, Shoe Lane, E.C.4.

UNIVERSITY Lecturer, wife, daughter (8), urgently requires fur./unf. flat, small house, Hampstead, Highgate, N.E. London pref.; good refs. 'Phone, Spate, MOU. 4624.

WOMAN doctor reqs. unfurn. flat or 1-2 rooms with tel., h. & c. w., central situation, nr tube. Excel. refs. Box A3943.

FLAT required by ex-officer and wife convenient for West End. It would be greatly appreciated if any reader who is likely to be vacating a reasonably priced flat in the near future would kindly communicate with Box A4009.

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UNIVERSITY of London will award following Postgrad. Studen which will be tenable in Session 19 (a) A number of Postgraduate Student any Faculty, each of the value of not l £150 (but not more than £250) and ten one year. (b) Frida Mond Studentsh Literary Studies). Value £130 a year years. (c) William Gilles Research Fe (Faculty of Science). Value £220 for Candids. for any of above Studentsh have taken a first degree in Univer more than three years previously. (on a prescribed form) must reach Registrar, Senate House, London, (from whom further partics. should be by May 1st.

denying hostility to the U.S.S.R., recognising its merits, and at the end of the book suggesting, not very convincingly, ways and means of drawing us all internationally together. In the present temper of the U.S.S.R. and her followers, in Europe there is little prospect that Cerberus will swallow the sop. One hopes, however, that all would-be democrats will prove a little more open-minded and meditate over Mr. de Madariaga's strictures upon, not Communists, but democrats.

LEONARD WOOLF

Horizon. March. 2s.

"We have taken enough beauty out of the world in our lifetime; for the sake of the generations who have yet to judge us, let us put some back." Thus Mr. Connolly, in an important appeal for English help in excavating antiquities in Italy. But the whole of this *Horizon* scintillates. A. J. Ayer politely annihilates Camus as a metaphysician. Two cautionary visions of the future appal, Maurice Richardson's a masterpiece of exact horror, Anna Kavan's dream-like—imaginative, but not nice enough in its language. (How can the Editor allow his journal to be smirched with the vulgar misuse of "phenomenal"?) Instructive and vivid reporting from Vienna and Berlin by Clarissa Churchill and Alan Pryce-Jones. A convincing article in commendation of modern Greek poetry, and some photographs of paintings by Ghika.

Week-end Competitions

No. 844

Set by Allan M. Laing

"The L.P.T.B. have opened a "courtesy campaign" with a wealth of seriously meant slogans. The usual prizes are offered for six rhymed couplets embodying satirically comic courtesy slogans obliquely reflecting on traffic experiences. Entries by April 9th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 841

Set by Saint-Loup

Six guineas are offered for six lines in verse thanking a country friend for a present of eggs, butter, or some other delicacy that has become rare.

Report by Saint-Loup

The entries, probably unsurpassed in number and certainly unequalled in sincerity, have made the poor setter's mouth water. If those who keep cows or hens or bees could read these hundreds of heartfelt verses, they could not but blush with conscious virtue. I selected thirty entries to be printed, but have only room for thirteen. I recommend a first prize of one guinea to Stephen Toulmin and eight shillings consolation prize for each other entry printed.

Daphne and Jasmine, Primrose and Rosemary,
field-fresh
Parsley, with Honey, Cream-cheese, Hazel-catkins,
our thanks
For long-lacked things brought hither in green
wicker basket.
Now may the basket bear back to you the City's best,
New-printed Odyssey, oldest of wisdom; what has
spanned
Twelve thousand seasons so surely will best bring our
love.

STEPHEN TOULMIN

No phrases well disposed
No apt quotation,
No burst of rapture's song,
Dear country friend, can picture our elation
When first your golden couplets were disclosed
In our blue egg-cups, desolate so long.

F. C. C.

Rich, silver casket, richer still within;
Flaked, pink ambrosia, under shining skin:
Fishmongers' favours we decline to take,
Scorning their offers of eternal hake.
To-day (oh, joy!) we've other fish to fry,
And thank you for that salmon from the Wye.

CAROLINE RAMSDEN.

Friend, how can I repay, in days like these,
Your sweet and golden gift, so apt to please
A stinted palate, so ripe with memories
Of heathered hill-sides, wing-loud linden trees,
And burdened gatherers homing on the breeze—
Pray share my grateful thanks with all your bees.

LITTLE BILLEE

Should this catch the eye of some L. E. J.-lovers,
Do send him some eggs, which for choice should be
plover's,
(Or, if this smacks of claiming an ell for an inch,
Some Black-headed gull's eggs will do at a pinch)
Pack them carefully, c/o NEW STATESMAN AND NATION,
And thank you (as shops say) in anticipation!

L. E. J.

And did you, in your rural plenty, guess
How vapid were the hot-pot, soup and stew?
"Of onions, take a pound . . ." each savoury mess
Shall breathe a fragrant benison on you,
And lurking atoms in the salad-bowl
Shall animate a gourmet's grateful soul.

V. B.

Thanks for peaches—they mean much:
That life's resumed down at the Hall
From morning-room to rabbit hutch,
With peaches growing on the wall.
With stables clock and hissing groom,
And Hampshire views from every room

J. THORNTON

In Africa, by prospect lured of nicotinous puffs,
The Kabyl from his burnous drew a pannier of oeufs.
In Italy the contadin would generally barter
Gallina's daily bounty for a bar of cioccolata.
In Civvy Street I've no such shifts to supplement my
messing,
So on your generosity can only beg God's blessing.

JOHN GRETTON DIXON

O may the heav'ns with sweet refreshing rain
And seasonable suns your crops sustain!
May all your lowing herds enjoy increase
And wethers of your flock grow golden fleece!
Such are the least of blessings earned for that
Great gift, that priceless jar of—cooking fat.

ALLAN M. LAING

A bottle! and—but it *can't* be!—
It's shape suggests a Burgundy!—
A Richebourg! vintage 'ninety-seven!!
Such gift can only come from heaven—
May Angels ever guard and keep
The Giver!—Do I wake or sleep?

WILLIAM BLISS

[ON RECEIVING A BASKET OF "NEWTON WONDERS."]
Your gift, dear friend, has eased my urban stay.
I see again that country child who plundered
Cool apple lofts, not knowing of the way
By which Man's sorrows came: how Eve had blundered
Nor did I, when the fruit from orchards gay
Fell downwards, wonder why, as Newton wondered.

DIABLOTIN

Accept our gratitude, we beg,
For th' uncovenanted egg,
May your couch be soft as silk
For the extra pint of milk,
But our heart's too full to utter
All we feel about the butter.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

They came by post. And thou didst know
How welcome they would be!
But every egg was cracked; and oh
The difference to me.

B. ASKWITH

Personal

H.N. (Isle of Wight). See "Quiver's Choice"—Sagittarius.

BLOOMSBURY office suite offered with part or whole time administrative services of Solicitor. Pub. Sch., Univ., fluent French and Italian. Lately Anglo-American staff. Pre-war experience in management and European and U.S. business. Box A3997.

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HOLIDAY Staff. Wanted school cook or others willing to help run domestic side informal house parties; paid or "au pair." Easter, Whitsun, Summer. Box A4759.

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SPEND Easter with private party young university people, country. Apply by letter to Eisendeln, c/o Overseas League, St. James, London.

SCIENTIFIC and other translations from and into Russian. Scientists, publishers and other refs. Russ. lessons. Box A3957.

C.O., 26, present training in fruit growing, would like interested person to correspond re future employment. Box A3998.

THE Cosmopolitan Dramatic Centre meeting Central London, now starting post-war expansion, welcomes new members (actors, producers, playwrights). Box A3797.

RUSSIAN taught by a Russian. 'Phone, Hampstead 3801.

Personal—continued

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OFFICE wanted. Good room wanted West End/Baker St. area. Write Krishnamurti Writings Inc., 29 Park Lane, Wembley, Middx.

THE Howard League for Penal Reform, Parliament Mansions, Abbey Orchard St., S.W.1. Summer School, St. Peter's Hall, Oxford, Thurs., June 27th to Mon., July 1st. Charge 14s. a day. Conference fee, 7s. 6d. Programme from secretary at above address.

YOUTHFUL, informal House-Party at Freemount School, Bacton Manor, Hereford. April 18th–29th. Partics. from School.

DESIGNERS of Industrial Products, Posters, Display, etc., who are independent free-lance workers, should contact Box A3228.

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YOUR handwriting is the mirror reflecting your hidden talents, your character and personality. Write for free leaflet, Institute of Graphology and Psychology, 15 Broad Court, London, W.C.2.

DOUGLAS Glass, child photographer, has returned from Europe. Appointments for April. 20 Abingdon Villas, W.8. Wes. 2336.

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